

**THE EDUCATED ELITE AND ASSOCIATIONAL LIFE IN EARLY  
LAGOS NEWSPAPERS: IN SEARCH OF UNITY FOR THE  
PROGRESS OF SOCIETY**

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**A thesis submitted to  
University of Birmingham  
for the degree of  
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

**Centre of West African Studies  
School of History and Cultures  
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University of Birmingham  
July 2011**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis has examined the associational lives of the educated African elite described in the Lagos newspapers between 1880 and 1920, focusing especially on articles about memorial associations, industrial and agricultural associations, and associations relating to the ceremonies of the British Empire. There are two purposes underlying this research. The first is to re-examine early colonial Lagos, which has been described as a divided society. The second is to re-evaluate the roles of the early Lagos press. Based on extensive examination of the Lagos newspapers, this thesis argues that the descriptions of associational activities in Lagos newspapers were part of a conscious project of the press to re-construct Lagos society by encouraging “unity” for an “African”/“Nigerian” way of progress. In addition to the Black Atlantic influences on the development of the idea of an African way of progress, it demonstrates the impact of Japan in the intellectual history of Nigeria. This thesis seeks to contribute to an understanding of the social life of the educated African elite and of press activity in early colonial Lagos within historical context that reveals new aspects of Lagos society between 1880 and 1920.

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

Looking back, I am aware that the production of my Ph.D. degree was never solely my own achievement but is the culmination of the goodwill, sacrifice and support of many people.

My deepest and most heartfelt gratitude go out to my supervisors, Professor Karin Barber, my first supervisor, and Dr. Insa Nolte, my second supervisor. They have been a constant source of encouragement and guidance from the start. I have benefited from their extensive experience in field work, teaching and researching on Nigeria. Without their considerable, unselfish support to put my Ph.D. project into practice, this thesis would never have been completed. I also sincerely appreciate the understanding and patience that they offered throughout the period, which sustained me through the programme, even in difficult times; and I am thankful for the excellent examples they provide as successful Africanists, educators and individuals. It is my greatest ambition to emulate them.

I am indebted to staff (and former members) of the Centre of West African Studies (CWAS) for providing a stimulating and friendly environment in which to learn and grow: they include Drs. Stewart Brown, Lynne Brydon, Reginald Cline-Cole, Paulo Fernando de Moraes Farias, Keith Shear, Kate Skinner, Toby Green, Katrien Pype and Paul Ugor. Seminars and conferences at CWAS have given me regular opportunities to discuss my research interests and acquire knowledge of different research approaches, which have broadened my vision. I also thank Maggie Egginton, our Department Administrator, for assisting me on numerous occasions.

I thank my student colleagues (or former students who have acquired Doctoral degrees) at CWAS for sharing the excitement and anxiety of thesis draft deadlines and



day-to-day research: they include Dr. Beatrice Dunkan, Dr. Jastina Dagbazah, David Kerr, Joanna Skelt, Dr. Obinna Okwelume, Shola Adenekan, Peter Arthur, Rebecca Jones and Muktari Magaji.

As an international student, I have encountered some difficulties in adjusting to UK academia and making steady progress with my research project within the limitations of time; however, the consistent encouragement of supervisors and the supportive environment of the department have led me to completion.

I gratefully acknowledge the funding sources that made my Ph.D. project possible. This piece of research would have been impossible without financial support from the Yoshida Scholarship Foundation (funded by YKK Corporation, Japan) between the 2006 and 2009 academic years, as well as the Overseas Research Student Awards and the History & West African Studies Student Award from the University of Birmingham, between the 2007 and 2009 academic years. In addition, the final year of the project was supported by JSPS (the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science).

I thank all the people who were immensely generous with their time and help during my archival research and interviewing in Nigeria in 2007. I am grateful to Dr. Adelemi Ajala of the University of Ibadan and his family for introducing me to Ibadan city, their hometown, Irobu, and Oshogbo, Dr. Ruth Marshall (the director of IFRA in Ibadan at the time and currently at the University of Toronto) for kindly accommodating me and giving me useful insights about Nigeria, Dr. David Uchenna Enweremadu for assisting my research trip to Lagos, Joseph Ayodokun and Tope Oladunjoye for helping my archival research in the Nigerian National Archive in Ibadan, Dr. Hidehiko Kikuno of the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) for introducing me to the agricultural development and experiments in Nigeria, and Professor John Godwin for providing considerable information on the Glover Memorial Hall, Lagos.

I would also like to acknowledge the mentoring and guidance that I received from Professors in Japan. In particular, I would like to mention Professors Masami Nakao, Yoichi Kibata, Takashi Koseki, Toshio Kusamitsu, Kumie Inose, Sugiko Nishikawa and Atsuko Hayakawa. I also thank former colleagues in the University of Tokyo where I trained as a graduate student of MA in Area Studies: they include Yhu Fujita, Tomoko Ikeda, Dr. Miya Itabashi, Dr. Atsushi Iguchi, Dr. Kota Ito, Megumi Iwasa and Dr. Motochika Kusaka.

Lastly, I extend my heartfelt appreciation to my family for their love and encouragement. Especially to my parents, Mitsuo Sawada and Keiko Sawada, whose hearty enthusiasm for teachings and for deepening their knowledge influenced me in many ways and led to my pursuit of a Ph.D. in the UK. Spending some of my primary and junior-high school years in Sydney, Australia had a significant impact on my life, developing my inquisitive mind. In addition to their consistent support throughout my life, I am sincerely grateful to them for providing this precious experience.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

CMS	Church Missionary Society
LT	<i>Lagos Times and Gold Coast Colony Advertiser</i>
E&LC	<i>Eagle and Lagos Critic</i>
LO	<i>Lagos Observer</i>
LS	<i>Lagos Standard</i>
LWR	<i>Lagos Weekly Record</i>
NC	<i>Nigerian Chronicle</i>
NP	<i>Nigerian Pioneer</i>
NT	<i>Nigerian Times</i>

(Note: The following abbreviations will be used in parenthetical references throughout the thesis)

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### **1.1. Aim of the Study: To Examine the Associational Life of the Educated Elite as Reported in Lagos Newspapers**

The focus of this research is on the associational lives of the educated African elite as described in the early Lagos newspapers between 1880 and 1920. Firstly, this research will serve as a re-examination of some aspects of early colonial Lagos, which has often been described as a divided society; secondly, it will serve as a re-evaluation of the roles of the early Lagos press. It seeks to contribute to an understanding of the social life of the educated African elite and of press activity in early colonial Lagos within historical context that reveals new aspects of Lagos society between 1880 and 1920.

Lagos newspapers in the above mentioned period were published by educated African elite,<sup>1</sup> mostly “*Saro*”<sup>2</sup>; returnees from Sierra Leone. They were “recaptives” of Yoruba descent, who returned to Lagos and its hinterland from Sierra Leone, from the 1850s onwards.<sup>3</sup> With their command of English and their connection to the interior

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<sup>1</sup> For details of the definition of the term “educated elite”, see Section 3 of this chapter.

<sup>2</sup> In this thesis, Yoruba words do not include tone and diacritical marks. It is because typesetters of the period under study were unable to provide all necessary fonts to provide diacritical markings. Instead Yoruba words are italicized unless appearing in quotations and references.

<sup>3</sup> “*Saro*” was a contraction of Sierra Leonean in the Yoruba language. After the abolition of the slave trade in 1807, many “recaptives”—Africans liberated from slave ships—settled in Sierra Leone. Educated at schools run by Christian missionaries, most of them converted to Christianity and acquired the English language. They formed the earliest educated African elite in British West Africa (Kopytoff 1965). The first groups of ex-slave Yorubas returned from Sierra Leone to Badagry in 1839. The number of immigrants increased in the 1850s with the arrival of Christian missionaries and European firms (Newbury 1992, 196). By 1865, *Saro* are estimated to have formed 20% of the population of Lagos and its vicinity (25,000) and the



regions, *Saro* and their descendants became active members of communities in Lagos, Abeokuta and other outlying towns, as clergies, colonial civil servants, lawyers, doctors, and other professions (Brown 1964; Kopytoff 1965; Falola 1999, 8-10). They also played leading roles in the early print culture in Southern Nigeria, as translators, print editors and authors of English and Yoruba publications.

The establishment of the *Lagos Times and Gold Coast Colony Advertiser* in 1880 paved the way for the African newspaper movement, and twenty-two newspapers were published between 1880 and 1920; the initial period of the press in Nigeria. All English-language newspapers between 1880 and 1920, except for the *Aurora*,<sup>4</sup> published weekly in Calabar from 1914 to 1917, were launched in Lagos, the centre of the literate community (Omu 1978; Falola and Heaton 2008). The early Lagos newspapers were published monthly, fortnightly or weekly and the inauguration of the daily newspapers was not realised until 1925, when Victor Babamuboni, a former book seller, launched the *Lagos Daily News*.<sup>5</sup> Although the distribution was mostly confined to the Lagos literary society, the annual circulation of Lagos newspapers rose from 6,490 on average in the 1880s, to 28,884 in the second decade of the twentieth century.<sup>6</sup>

In addition to the role of the Lagos press as critic of the Colonial Government (Omu 1978; Duyile 1987), newspapers served as the media for social announcements,

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figure became 2.56% in 1872; that is 1,533 out of the population of 60,000 (Kopytoff 1965, 86 & 171).

<sup>4</sup> It was established by William Coulson Labor, who came from a well-known printers' family in Freetown. He subsequently published as the *Nigerian Herald* at Enugu around 1920 and as the *Dawn* (1923- 37) at Port Harcourt (Coker 1968, 45).

<sup>5</sup> The *Lagos Daily News* was purchased by Herbert Macaulay and J. A. Caulcrik, a Sierra Leone-born surgeon and politician, in 1927.

<sup>6</sup> It is uncertain whether this is the total number of newspaper copies printed or sold. These numbers were registered and listed as "The Circulations of the Principal Publications" in the Blue Books of the colony. For more detail on annual circulation of Lagos newspapers between 1880 and 1920, see Appendix 7 (*Blue Book of Lagos*, 1880-1906; *Blue Book of Southern Nigeria* 1906-1914; *Blue Book of Nigeria* 1914-1920).

disseminating information about daily events, marriages, meetings, entertainments and, occasionally, trivial and individual information about household events (Echeruo 1977). Announcements or comments on various voluntary associations—relating to religion, recreation, ethnic groups, education, occupations and public ceremonies—were essential functions of Lagos newspapers.

Regarding the voluntary associations of the educated elite, research on early colonial Lagos refers to the subject, but few attempts have so far been made at exploring it in detail (Coleman 1958; Brown 1964; Echeruo 1977; Mann 1985; Zachernuk 2000).<sup>7</sup> This is due to the insufficiency of historical documents on each association, which made it difficult to capture complete factual descriptions of associations in the early colonial period, such as membership, subscription, year of establishment, participation and regulation. However, the descriptions of associations in newspapers enable us to trace not only facts about their activities, but also ideologies or rhetoric used to discuss associational life. The meanings and roles of each society cannot be presumed without analysing the vocabulary, used by contemporary people, to describe them; forming the images that reflect the tide of time. Therefore, this thesis examines the representation of associational life of educated Africans in Lagos newspapers from 1880 to 1920, focusing especially on articles on memorial associations, industrial and agricultural associations, and associations relating to the ceremonies of the British Empire. As will be shown in Chapter 3, these three types of associations have received less attention in previous studies of the social history of Lagos. However, newspaper articles on these associations served as stimuli for discussions on how the future of Lagos society should be.

The period of the research was chosen for two main reasons. Firstly, it was the

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<sup>7</sup> See Chapter 3 for the overview of voluntary associations in colonial Lagos.

period when all English-language newspapers were published in Lagos by African newspapermen, with one exception, *Aurora*, published in Calabar. Between 1880 and 1920, Lagos, as the centre of print culture in the territory now called Nigeria, flourished, and various experiments of the African-owned press were carried out. Secondly, the period begins just after the launch of the first newspaper published by Africans in Lagos, and ends just before the expansion of readership due to the establishment of several Yoruba-English language newspapers in the 1920s. Therefore, the period between 1880 and 1920 provides continuity and a coherent linguistic environment as a topic of research on Lagos newspapers.

As mentioned, the first purpose underlying this research is a re-examination of some aspects of early colonial Lagos society by focusing attention on the associational lives of the educated African elite.

Early colonial Lagos has been described as a stratified society, in which social disparity between several groups—such as European,<sup>8</sup> *Saro*, Brazilians,<sup>9</sup> traditional elite like *obas* (king) and chiefs, Muslim and indigenous Africans—had existed since the early nineteenth century (Brown 1964; Baker 1974; Cole 1975). Since their establishment in the 1880s, the Lagos newspapers frequently lamented the paucity of unity among several groups in Lagos. For instance, the *Eagle and Lagos Critic*,<sup>10</sup> in

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<sup>8</sup> Europeans formed only a small part of the population in Lagos. There were 111 “whites” registered on the census of 1881 (the population of “blank and mulattos” was 37,341) and 308 in 1901 (Baker 1974, 22).

<sup>9</sup> The repatriated people (ex-slaves) from Brazil or Cuba were called “*Amaro*” in Yoruba language. They were self-emancipated, having purchased or been granted their freedom, and, from the 1840s, crossed the Atlantic in search of their homeland and job opportunities. They tended to be Catholic (with integration of Yoruba religions), with high industrial skills, and spoke Yoruba and Portuguese (Brown 1964; Kopytoff 1965, 86-88; Law 2004). The population of *Amaro* was 1,237 in 1872, while that of *Saro* was 1,533. See Chapter 6 for the influence of Brazilian returnees on the construction of pan-Yoruban consciousness.

<sup>10</sup> *Eagle and Lagos Critic* was one of the early Lagos newspaper set up by O. E. Macaulay in 1883. For details of each Lagos newspapers between 1880 and 1920, see Chapter 2.

1883, commented that Lagos was not a unified society because it was divided into “four distinct elements”; that is, “aboriginal, under King Docemo”, “the Mahommedan, under the Iman and the Alfas”, “the Portuguese under its recognised leaders”; and “the English” including *Saro* (28 July 1883, 2-3). Patrick Cole (1975) identifies the “four communities of Lagos” in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as “Europeans”, “the educated Africans (Saros)”, “Brazilians”, and “the indigenous Yoruba” (45). Each group resided in separate areas of Lagos. There was a palace of the *oba* (traditional king) in the northwest corner of Lagos Island, called Isale Eko. The Europeans lived on the Marina (south western shore of the island), *Saros* in an area called Olowogbowo (western point of the island), Brazilians in centre, known as the “Brazilian Quarter”, and indigenous Africans on the rest of the island (Kopytoff 1965, 88-89; Baker 1974, 24-30; Cole 1975, 45-46). Although some research has been undertaken into the kinship and economic relations between the educated elite and the people in the interior region, as well as investigations into the alliance with traditional elite (Cole 1975; Echeruo 1977), the research on early Lagos society tends to assume a rigid separation between the educated elite and the rest of the population.

However, an examination of Lagos press reports on associational lives will show different aspects of Lagos. It reveals attempts by the educated elite to transcend tensions among different groups and to overcome some of the social cleavages that were retarding progress, and shows how, in some cases, voluntary associations bridged social gaps through interaction with different groups in Lagos society. Consequently, it demonstrates how the Lagos press and the educated African elite utilised some associational activities as a model for transcending tensions and sometimes overcoming social cleavage, and also ways in which they made use of the political framework of Yorubaland or Nigeria, initially established by the British Government, for the purpose

of developing a sense of unity in Lagos. However, it is important to note here that there were disparities between what the educated elite reported in the Lagos press and the reality of their actions. Though, the educated elite's voluntary associations did serve as a bridge to non-elite sections of the community, they also often had a symbolic role in drawing boundaries between the prominent educated elite and the rest of the population, for instance, by restricting the administrative roles of these associations to the prominent male educated elite members. In addition, many of their activities affirmed their sectional interests as educated elite.

The above-mentioned first purpose of the research leads to the second one: re-evaluation of the roles of the early Lagos press. The Lagos press served as a medium for furnishing information, educator of the masses, recorder of local history and culture, and critic of the Colonial authorities (Echeruo 1977; Omu 1978). Previous studies have emphasised the role of newspapers as triggers of the early nationalist movement. However, in this research, examination of what information relating to the social activities of the educated elite was shared, will facilitate a more multi-dimensional approach toward the Lagos press.

Lagos newspapers served as recorders of community life. We can catch a glimpse of the daily lives of Lagos elite society, not only in the articles, but also in the advertisements, which occupied from a quarter to half of the page.<sup>11</sup> As well as the public notices, such as government publicity and the opening of new schools and churches, there were private notices, including those of the removal of a resident, changes of Christian names to traditional names, and even a notice by a "Young

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<sup>11</sup> Omu (1978) emphasised the importance of advertisements in 1880-1937 Lagos newspapers and estimates the proportion space given to advertisements as 50-90% (88), but my research on the portion of advertisements between 1880 and 1920 shows these percentage were 25-50% on average and there was even an issue without advertisements such as the first edition of the *Nigerian Chronicle*.

Gentleman with moderate fortune, fair prospects and comfortable home” who was seeking a “WIFE” (LO, 5 June 1886, 4).<sup>12</sup> The notices by indigenous import retailers showed the educated elite’s dress and diet. For instance, Mrs. Crowther’s shop on Broad Street, Lagos sold groceries, such as souchong tea, sardines, salmon, milk, sugar, rice, sausages, pig-tongues, biscuits, ham, jam, fruits in bottles, ginger ale; and what they called “fancy goods”, such as ladies’ hats, boots, gloves, silk mittens and perfumes (E&LC, 11 April 1885, 1). Advertisements for “indigenous quack medicines”—the ointment for malaria disease, painkillers invaluable for cholera, tonic wine for anaemia—demonstrates the “scientific” knowledge of the time (Omu 1978, 90).<sup>13</sup>

Despite the fact that the selection of news could be dependent on editors’ preferences and their political views,<sup>14</sup> newspapers were seen as the repository of “facts”, culture and knowledge. The Lagos newspapers were preserved and recycled for decades after publication in the private libraries of the educated elite. The newspapers were simultaneously the ephemeral mode of composition, “one-day best-seller” (Anderson [1983] 1991, 35), which disseminated emergent events like a notice board, and, at the same time, they were the organ for giving a permanent form to events; the recorders of local history.

What is more, as will be shown in the following chapters, the Lagos press also served as the maker and media for the values of the time. Ideas on unity, progress, morality, respectability, the educated elite’s mission to the illiterate section of the society, and the rehabilitation of traditional customs, religions and ethnic identities were

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<sup>12</sup> See Plate 2-1 in Appendix 2.

<sup>13</sup> See Plates 2-2 and 2-3 in Appendix 2.

<sup>14</sup> Lagos newspapers often became the tool to satisfy the educated elite’s desire to show off their luxurious Victorian lifestyle. They also served as the self-monument of the editors or editor’s family. For instance, O. E. Macaulay, editor of the *Eagle and Lagos Critic*, set up the Macaulay Memorial Association and called for donations in his paper to procure a suitable memorial to his father, the late Rev. T. B. Macaulay (30 June 1883, 1-4).

formulated and disseminated through newspapers.<sup>15</sup>

The newspapers published by the educated African elite formed the main arena for contemporary debates on politics, international relationships, and social and cultural issues. While it would be inaccurate to regard the press as “representative” of the entire Lagos society, the newspapers can be seen to be the mirror that reflected the mood and temper of a “crucial section of the society” in that period (Echeruo 1977, 2).

Benedict Anderson ([1983] 1991) emphasises the crucial role of print-capitalism—trade in books and printed materials—in the founding of an “imagined community”, which is envisioned as the stretch of simultaneous events, and in the development of national consciousness, by creating certain standardised languages that could be used to reach diverse groups of people. This thesis illuminates another aspect of the emergence of public consciousness (or public sphere)<sup>16</sup> through the examination of newspaper descriptions on associational life in early colonial Lagos. In nineteenth and early twentieth century Lagos, associational activities, as well as printed materials, prepared the space and time in which the literate section of society shared simultaneous experiences that allowed those who participated in them to conceive of themselves as not alone, but rather as part of a group working together. Newspaper descriptions of associational activities served as a means of providing a

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<sup>15</sup> Furthermore, the Lagos newspapers were the producers of new kinds of literary genres. As Karin Barber (1997; 2005) discusses, *Itan Igbesi Aiye Emi Segilola* (The story of Me, Segilola), which was produced as serialised letters to the editor of *Akede Eko*, I. B. Thomas, can be seen as one of the first Yoruba popular literatures in the 1920s, written by Africans who were amongst the top layer of the colonised.

<sup>16</sup> My understanding of “public sphere” is derived from Habermas ([1989] 1992). For Habermas, the public sphere was a constellation of public institutions (daily newspapers, journals, clubs, bars, cinemas, and coffeehouses) that formed a space of political and cultural engagement (provided settings for public debate), free from government intervention. I use the public sphere as a theoretical space where divergent educated African elite interacted, seeking to influence the Colonial Government’s decision-making and to influence the future of society. This study would be able to trace attempts at establishing the educated African elite’s public sphere appearing through the press and associational activities in Lagos.

collective memory, regardless of individual participation in associations.

## **1.2. Writing and Print Culture in Colonial Africa**

This section aims at positioning colonial Lagos, the setting of this research, into the wider cultural and historical context by providing the historical background of writing and print culture in colonial Anglophone sub-Saharan Africa<sup>17</sup>, and includes a brief comparative study on the development of African-initiated newspapers in South, West and East Africa.

Literacy in indigenous and English languages, as well as the technique of printing, came to many parts of Africa with the arrival of Christian missionaries, whose purpose was to disseminate the dogma of biblical texts, as encouraged by the establishment of the British Colonial Governments in Anglophone sub-Sahara Africa from the early nineteenth century. The British missionary schools and the Colonial Governments' regimes produced the first generation of educated Africans, who often served as middlemen between the British Government and the illiterate indigenous people (Boahen [1985] 1990, 221; Gérard 1986; Griffiths 2000, 54). The spread of primary education assisted the emergence of new, less-educated literate generations, who were possibly consumers of publications in the colonies. The rise of literary culture, from the beginning of the twentieth century, enabled the young literate non-elite (who were often aspiring to enter the territory of the elite) to form literary societies for the purpose of

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<sup>17</sup> Though one cannot disregard the contribution of Arabic and Ajami (Hausa and other African language written in the Arabic alphabet) writings, introduced by the Muslim intelligentsia, to print culture in colonial Africa, this cannot be discussed here in detail. For early Arabic writings see Gérard (1986, 16-17). Chapter 3 of Newell (2006c) explores the influence of Islamic perspectives toward West African literature. For Arabic historiography, especially on Yoruba from the seventeenth century to the present, see Danmole (1991).



educating themselves (Newell 2002). While there were time differences, depending on the circumstances of the different colonies, establishment of printing presses and the spread of literacy created a “broad category of aspirational readers and writers” in sub-Saharan Anglophone Africa (Barber 2006, 7).

The technique of writing and printing served as a colonial instrument for influencing indigenous people. Colonial governments used various documents to dominate indigenous people, such as encoding Africans’ ethnic identities on pass cards and regulating their marriages in legal registers.<sup>18</sup> Nevertheless, Africans did not passively obey this “documentary bullying”,<sup>19</sup> and responded by producing their own writings.

There were various ways in which educated and semi-educated Africans adapted and used the European technique of writing and printing for their own good. Firstly, local people used writing and printing techniques as a medium for political self-assertion, often as a strong force of colonial confrontation, by publishing pamphlets, poetry, drama and novels (Boahen [1985] 1990, 237). Among the various forms of publications, newspapers, especially those from the interwar period, have been regarded as tools with which to propagate criticism of colonial governments and as symbols and instruments of African nationalism. Africanist scholars who emphasise the sophisticated

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<sup>18</sup> For instance, in colonial Northern Ghana, the texts and categories produced by external observers, such as colonial administrators and European anthropologists, not only distorted and misrepresented indigenous social practices, but also silenced the flexibility, ambiguity and negotiability of oral cultures, as well as violating the autonomy of the “world of experience” (the indigenous world of orally transmitted knowledge, beliefs, and social practices). Maps fixed Lodagaa people’s ethnic identities in a particular space; ethnographic records defined local people by a certain name and their degree of “primitiveness” according to the level of nudity; historical writings legitimised particular views of the past, and administration records regulated conjugal relationships (Hawkins 2002).

<sup>19</sup> The word “documentary bullying” was borrowed from the Introduction, written by Karin Barber, in *Africa's Hidden Histories: Everyday Literacy and Making the Self* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006), 6.

nature of African political organisation, resistance and “African Initiative” in the colonial period, explore the role of the press as a method for expressing opposition to the Colonial Government, which, as a result, assisted the organisation of political associations (Boahen [1985] 1990).

Secondly, the local elite and non-elite appropriated the European technique of writing and printing as a method of collective self-categorisation and self-representation. This was carried out through revision and reinvention of the past, or by presenting the society they desired. For instance, various publications from the late nineteenth century in Nigeria assisted in the construction of pan-Yoruba identity (Peel 1989). In 1930s and 1940s colonial Kenya, although the interests and identities of the Kikuyu people were not unified, there were attempts to design and create new communities with the assistance of print culture. Kikuyu historiography was created, using a selective memory approach, according to the requirements of the time (Lonsdale 2002).<sup>20</sup>

Thirdly, the technique of writing was used by local educated and semi-educated people as a private activity that enabled personal self-realisation and self-making/self-fashioning. Contributors to Barber (2006) examined extensive writings in the form of letters, epistolary novels, obituaries, correspondence, and diaries by those in an intermediate position between the “enlightened” elite and the illiterate mass in colonial Anglophone Africa. These personal writings were often preserved (or hidden)

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<sup>20</sup> Lonsdale (2002) explores a trajectory of the construction of early Kikuyu histories through conscious editing of the past by the Christian *athomi* (readers) in the 1930s and 1940s. Early authors of printed history in Kikuyu, such as Jomo Kenyatta, Stanley Kiama Gathigira and Henry Muoria, silenced a multiplicity of Kikuyu origins and simplified various oral histories, in order to create a unifying tale of Kikuyu. With self-censorship of internal conflict and failure, the Kikuyu were described as a unified group with a civilisation equivalent to that of Britain. A similar phenomenon can be seen in the historiographies of the Mau Mau. Despite the fact that historiography has highlighted Mau Mau’s internal divisions, the representation of Mau Mau partisans “as a united sovereign polity with an identifiable citizenry was a useful political strategy” (Peterson 2003, 77).

in trunks, suitcases, plastic bags, and other repositories, but were composed with an eye for imagined audiences. The “tin-trunk literati”, such as teachers, herbalists, traders, newspaper columnists, school-masters and school-girls, often with isolated and insecure positions, used the practice of self-documentation with the hope of stabilising their lives and managing their reputations. As a result, the “tin-trunk” literature “involved the constitution of new kinds of self-representation and personhood” (7).

What is more, the African-initiated newspapers provided educated Africans with their print public sphere in which literate people—from different denominational, ethnic, educational, occupational, economic and political backgrounds—could, at least theoretically, discuss topics of concern. By using pseudonyms, readers could express different opinions and even participate in controversial issues without the concern of losing face or reputation. The press was the “public sphere” itself, and at the same time, the medium in which to create social space and the envisioned “public”; that is, the collective people (readers and listeners) present in the public sphere.<sup>21</sup>

The different political, economic and social histories of each British colony of Africa influenced the development of writing and print culture in each colony. Regarding African-initiated newspaper production, this began in the 1850s on the west coast of Africa, in the 1880s in South Africa, and in the 1920s in East Africa.<sup>22</sup> On the

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<sup>21</sup> It would be useful to note that the emergence of the public sphere in West Africa traced a different trajectory to that of Europe because there was generally no manuscript culture before printing as literacy came with missionaries (Barber 2007, 143-45).

<sup>22</sup> The press in sub-Saharan Anglophone Africa has a history dating back to the beginning of the nineteenth century. The British colonial government published newspapers, such as the *Cape Town Gazette*, in South Africa from 1800, the *Sierra Leone Gazette* (later renamed the *Royal Gazette and Sierra Leone Advertiser*) from 1801, and the *Royal Gold Coast Gazette* from 1822. Mission presses then started to produce their own publications. The Methodist and Presbyterian missionaries initiated a Xhosa-language newspaper, *Umshumayeli Wendaba* (Publisher of the News) from 1837 in Cape Colony. In 1842, the Wesleyan Mission Society established the *Sierra Leone Watchman* in Freetown. These governmental gazettes and mission-run newspapers provided examples which later generations of educated Africans were to follow (Omu 1978, 5-11; Switzer and Switzer 1979, 1-4; Ochs 1986, 6).

west coast of Africa, where fewer Europeans settled than in South and East Africa, local people had relatively more autonomy in publishing (Gérard 1986, 26). In 1855, the first African-initiated newspaper in the British colonies of sub-Saharan Africa, the *New Era*, was published in Freetown by an Afro-West Indian, William Drape.<sup>23</sup> The other West African British colonies followed: the *Accra Herald* in the Gold Coast from 1857<sup>24</sup>, *Iwe Irohin fun awon ara Egba ati Yoruba*<sup>25</sup> 1859-67 in Abeokuta and the *Anglo-African* in Lagos from 1863 (McGarry 1978, 1-2; Omu 1978, 6-9).

In South Africa, from the 1820s onwards, European missionaries established the printing press,<sup>26</sup> however, white dominance of the press activities delayed literary responses from Africans. It was only in 1884 that the first African-owned paper, *Imvo Zabantsundu* (Native Opinion), was published by John Tengo Jabavu.<sup>27</sup> *Imvo Zabantsundu* was an English/Xhosa language weekly newspaper, which became the most influential organ of African opinion in the Cape Colony (Ainslie 1966, 47-48; Switzer and Switzer 1979, 1-4). This paper represented the African mission-educated

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<sup>23</sup> The first press in Sub-Saharan Africa initiated by a black person was the *Liberian Herald*, in 1826, however, it was in 1855 in Sierra Leone when an indigenous African initiated paper was established in the British colonies in Sub-Saharan Africa. The British established trading ports in the Gambia in 1661, and Sierra Leone in 1787, which later became “depositories” for slaves recaptured by the British navy and for “the black poor in London”. Liberia was more westernised than other Western coastal areas. It was settled in 1822 by liberated black slaves from the United States, supported by American philanthropic organisations, and was never officially a US colony; its status was confirmed in 1847 when it became an independent republic with a constitution based on that of the US. It is not surprising, therefore, that the first black owned newspaper of Sub-Saharan Africa in Liberia: in 1826 Charles Force, an American freed slave, founded the *Liberia Herald*, though he died shortly afterwards. The title was revived in 1830 by John Brown Russwurm, Jamaican-born mulatto (Ainslie 1966, 21-22).

<sup>24</sup> It was a hand-written sheet, published by Charles Bannerman, later re-titled the *West African Herald* in 1858 (McGarry 1978, 1-2).

<sup>25</sup> This newspaper was not strictly speaking African-initiated: it was founded by the CMS missionary Henry Townsend, but with the collaboration of bilingual “Saro” Yoruba. See Chapter 2 of this thesis in detail.

<sup>26</sup> For early African writers in South Africa, see Couzens (1984) and Chapter 3 in Gérard (1986) and Attwell (2005).

<sup>27</sup> John Tengo Jabavu (1859-1921) had already had experience of editing the mission-owned newspaper *Isigidimi Sama Xosa* (the Xhosa Express) published by the Lovedale mission from 1876.

“petty bourgeoisie” in Eastern Cape from 1884, but it only expressed moderate nationalism within the framework of the laws of the colony (Switzer 1984, 1990).<sup>28</sup>

In British East Africa, the production of English language writings by Africans was delayed due to the fact that it had been a white settler colony from 1895 and there were far fewer educated Africans than in the West African coastal area where liberated slaves and their descendants acquired Western education from the early nineteenth century (Griffiths 2000, 42). Early newspaper publications were in the hands of European missionaries and the Indian community,<sup>29</sup> and it was in December 1920, when a monthly Luganda language newspaper, *Sekanyola*, was established for the Baganda in Uganda and Kenya. The first Gikuyu paper was *Muigwithania*, which was initially published in 1925; edited by the future President of Kenya, Jomo Kenyatta (Ainslie 1966, 97-109; Scotton 1973).<sup>30</sup>

Regarding the historical context of colonial Lagos, Christian missionaries brought the technique of writing and publishing to south western Nigeria in the 1850s.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> It was in the 1920s, when the formation of African political organisations, such as the South African Native National Congress (renamed in 1923 as the African National Congress), the Industrial and Commercial Workers’ Union of Africa, and the Cape Native Voters’ Convention, encouraged the establishment of nationalist papers, such as *Izwi Laabantu*, *Koranta ea Becoana* and *Abantu-Batho*, that served as watch dogs in a white-dominated, racially stratified South Africa (Switzer 1990; Limb 2000).

<sup>29</sup> The *East African Standard* is the oldest newspaper in East Africa, established in Mombasa in 1902 by an Asian immigrant, A. M. Jeevanjee, who moved to Nairobi in 1910 (Ainslie 1966, 97-98).

<sup>30</sup> These early African-owned and edited newspapers in East Africa were proclaimed to be tools of the protest movement from the 1920s. The nationalist press reflected the educated Africans’ anti-Indian feelings and protests at the Indians’ demands for land and voting rights. They also criticised the chiefs and their claims for land and power, as well as taxation by the British protectorate government (Scotton 1973).

<sup>31</sup> It was *Saro* who invited both Yoruba and European missionaries and teachers in Sierra Leone to Yorubaland in the 1840s. Rev. Henry Townsend (1815-1866), the founder of CMS Yoruba mission, set up a press at Abeokuta in 1854 and began distributing religious pamphlets. Throughout the nineteenth century the Church Missionary Society played a leading role in the printing culture of Western Nigeria. They contracted to companies in London such as Seeley, and distributed religious books in Nigeria, as well as establishing their own publishing firm, CMS bookshop on the corner of Broad and Odunlami Streets in Lagos in 1869, and worked as a centre facility for the printing of religious books and pamphlets in Yoruba and English. From the

European and local Christian missionaries endeavoured to introduce literary education in the vernacular as well as in the English language for the purpose of disseminating Christian education (Ajayi [1965] 1969a; Boahen [1985] 1990, 221). The influx of educated Sierra Leoneans, in the second half of the nineteenth century, increased the proportion of the population that was literate in English.<sup>32</sup>

From the last quarter of the nineteenth century in Lagos, voluntary associations, such as the Lagos Mutual Improvement Society, the Lagos Auxiliary of the British and Foreign Bible Society, the Native Research Society, and the Abeokuta Patriotic Association, held meetings and lectures on language, history, customs, religion and morality (Echeruo 1977; Law 1996). These literary societies prepared a seedbed for historical writings by the local educated elite. Early Christian Yorubas, such as John A. Otonba Payne, C. J. George and Samuel Johnson, published pamphlets and books and contributed articles on local history in Lagos newspapers. Discussions on the history of the Yoruba people over the space of printed materials galvanised the project of Yoruba unification, and assisted the gradual “invention” of the “Yoruba” as one unified group (Peel 1989; Law 1996).

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1870s, indigenous retailers like J. P. Haastrup and Thomas A. King started importing publications from England and America in accordance with their business of hat shop and drug store respectively (Brown 1964, 276). There also emerged individual publication enterprise like Richard Beale Blaize (1845-1906)’s Caxton Printing Press in 1875 and Thomas A. King & Co. at the end of 1870s. In the late 1880s, there were at least six private printing presses existed in Lagos—those of J. B. Benjamin on Breadfruit Street, Andrew M. Thomas on Victoria Road, P. Adolphus Marke’s “the Commercial Printing Press” at Marina and printing establishment the *Eagle and Lagos Critic* on Odunlami Stree (Payne 1878, 49-50; Payne 1886, 40; E&LC, 31 May 1884, 1; *Mirror*, 3 November 1888, 1), however, the amount of books distributed by indigenous printing press was limited compared to those by the CMS (Omu 1978, 23; Doortmont 1994, 41-44; Zachernuk 2000, 31).

<sup>32</sup> As discussed in Chapter 2, the census of Lagos in 1891 shows that, out of a total “Blacks and Mulattoes” population of 85,457, 5.5% (4,714) were reported to be literate, or partly literate, in the English language (*Lagos Annual Report* for 1891). This number rose to approximately 10,000 in 1914 (NP, 29 May 1914, 6), and in 1921, 10% of the population of Lagos (99,690) was able to read and write (either in English or vernacular), whilst 20% were only able to read (Baker 1974, 76).

Literacy was an important way of acquiring educated elite status in colonial Lagos as it enabled local people to seek opportunities in the formal sectors as well as middlemen positions (between European companies and interior illiterate people) in trade. Until the 1920s in Lagos, however, literacy entrenched the stratification of society by giving the privileged educated African access to power and wealth. However, urbanisation and the spread of primary education fostered social mobility, which assisted the emergence of new less-educated literate generations. The proliferation of Yoruba language newspapers in the 1920s also encouraged the expansion of a less-educated readership (Barber 2005).

Of the three above-mentioned ways in which local educated and semi-educated people appropriated the technique of writing and printing (for political assertion, collective self-representation and personal self-making), this thesis concentrates mainly on the second way, and discusses the role of writing and printing as tools of self-representation in order to construct a specific society. However, it also touches on the first and third categories. Regarding the first category, the method of political assertion, the Lagos press was an active opponent of the Colonial Government (see Chapter 2 and Chapter 6). In Nigeria, the press constituted the chief instrument of opposition to the colonial government until 1922, when three African representatives were elected as members of the Legislative Council.<sup>33</sup> The Nigerian press had a significant influence on the politics of nationalism from the 1880s, and on the formation of political parties in the 1930s. The press was an effective organ for galvanising its readers to protest against the colonial administration, on issues such as policies relating

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<sup>33</sup> In 1922, the colonial government set up a new constitution creating a Legislative Council of 46 members, 27 officials, and 19 non-officials. Of the non-officials, three were to be elected by adult propertied males in Lagos and one in Calabar. This was the first instance of elected African representation on a Legislative Council in British Africa.

to water tax, land rights, and newspaper ordinances (Omu 1978; Duyile 1987). The third category, the way of self-making/self-fashioning, can be seen in the case of John Otonba Payne, who travelled to Brazil and England in 1886, and the attitude of the Lagos Executive Committee at the time of the Colonial and Indian Exhibition (see Chapter 6).

Print culture provided local people with a forum for debating the colonial situation in which they found themselves. Through the act of printing, and through the interaction between publishers and readers of the press, Lagos newspapers assisted in the construction of an envisaged community: Lagos or Yorubaland or Nigeria, depending on time and situation. The analysis of Lagos newspapers in this research shows a trajectory of the way in which the educated elite attempted to achieve an “African” way of progress, and to share, with the semi-educated and illiterate indigenous people in the community, its visualised or materialised forms of civilisation, such as memorial monuments, industrial institutes, and ceremonies relating to the British Empire. As will be examined in the following chapters, the Lagos press utilised concepts of “memorialisation” and “industry and agriculture” to achieve the new Lagos society, with its own mode of civilisation. In addition, the idea of the British Empire is the key to the construction of the “imagined” communities of Lagos/Yoruba/Nigeria.

### **1.3. Terminology: “Educated Elite”**

The main actors of this study are the educated African elite, whom I call “educated elite” in the text of this thesis. The educated Africans, who formed the earliest elite positions—as missionaries, colonial civil servants, wealthy traders and other professions—were mostly *Saro* or their descendants, who acquired the English language at mission schools. As studies on Lagos history utilise different terms to refer to the



educated African elite, and these terms contain different concepts according to the authors, it would be useful to present the reason for choosing “educated elite” and the usage of the term in my research.

The studies that examine the educated portion of Lagos in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century British Colony of Lagos, such as Brown (1964), Kopytoff (1965), Ayandele (1974), Cole (1975), Echeruo (1977), Mann (1985) and Zachernuk (2000) use different terms—Sierra Leoneans, Lagos elite, educated elite, modern elite, intelligentsia—to describe the educated African elite.<sup>34</sup> Among these researches, the most numerical and precise definition is presented by Mann (1985). Her “study uses ‘educated elite’ to refer to men and women at the top of the growing population of educated Africans in early colonial Lagos” (2), using a definition of the elite based primarily on occupational roles: “all professionals (doctors, lawyers, ministers, headmasters, surveyors and engineers), colonial servants of the rank First Class Clerk or above, and Western-educated import-export merchants who lived or regularly worked in the colony between 1880 and 1915... Also included are a few other occupational groups, such as newspaper publishers and planters” (5).<sup>35</sup> This artificial categorisation enables her to present an exact number of the elite males, 200, in the community.

This research concurs with Mann’s standpoint, which assumes education and

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<sup>34</sup> Brown (1964), whose focus is on the history of the daily lives of people in Lagos in the nineteenth century, uses the term “Sierra Leoneans” for the people described as “educated elite” or “elite” in other studies; Kopytoff (1965) also uses “Sierra Leonians”. This is because most of the people constituting the educated elite in Lagos in the nineteenth century were immigrants (or recaptives) from Sierra Leone. Echeruo (1977), whose focus is on nineteenth century Lagos newspapers, uses the words “Lagos elite”/“elite”/“Victorian Lagosians” interchangeably; Ayandele (1974) and Mann (1985) use “educated elite”; Cole (1975) uses “modern elite”; Zachernuk (2000) uses the term “intelligentsia” (12-13).

<sup>35</sup> Mann (1985) also refers to the average annual income of the elite males: colonial servants earned, on average, £212 between 1880 and 1915; the elite males in clerical service received £213 in 1880, £174 in 1891 and £252 in 1913; those in the Colonial Medical Service took home an average of £250 in 1891 and £393 in 1913 (31).

occupation as “determinants of educated elite status” (6); however, it treats “educated elite” as a more dynamic and situational concept. The category of elite was flexible and complex and was influenced by the circumstances: while it would at times have included immigrants from Brazil, the West Indies or Cuba, and the traditional potentates such as indigenous chiefs and the Obas, people in certain occupations would have been excluded by others. For instance, it would have been possible for merchants with huge fortunes to have been excluded by professionals who recognised higher education as the essential criteria of the elite. In the 1920s, growing numbers of an educated Muslim elite emerged in Lagos (Baker 1974; Cole 1975), although they are not extensively examined here. What is more, the boundary between elite and semi-elite gradually became insecure and obscure due to the expansion of primary education in Nigeria in the 1920s.

In addition, it would be useful to note that the term “educated elite” was not the contemporary term between 1880 and 1920, the period covered by this study. Of the terms that referred to educated African elite, such as “elite”, “educated elite”, “educated native”, “civilised/civilized native”, and “Black Englishmen”,<sup>36</sup> the term “educated native” was most frequently used in the Lagos newspapers between 1880 and 1920. The number of articles that contain the terms “educated native”, “civilised/civilized native”,

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<sup>36</sup> According to Zachernuk (1991), the educated African elite in the nineteenth century had ambitions to become “black Englishmen” (149); however, the term “Black Englishmen” was used only occasionally in the Lagos newspapers, and mostly in a negative context. For instance, in an article titled “The Sierra Leone Trouble”, the *Lagos Standard* criticised Africans who prided their proximity to “civilization” and called them “black Englishmen” who “live a false life and die a false death” (8 June 1898, 2). The *Lagos Weekly Record* inserted a manuscript of the lecture delivered by Rev. Mojola Agbebi on the social life of Sierra Leone and quoted his words: “Some of the intelligent Christian Sierra Leone at Freetown take a relish in thinking acting and saying that they are black Englishmen. But a black Englishman is a nondescript and an absurdity. Such a creature may exist in sentiment and imagination, but not in reality” (22 December 1894, 5). The term “Black Englishmen” reflects the fact that educated Africans, who often studied in Britain, were mocked as Englishmen with black faces. However, it is important to note that, with their self-critical attitudes, they had no hesitation in retaining their cultural privileges as “civilised” and leading members of the community.

“elite” and “educated elite” in the *Lagos Standard* between 1907 and 1920 are: 65 with the term “educated native”, 17 with “elite”, 6 with “civilised/civilized native” and none for “educated elite” respectively (see Appendix 3).<sup>37</sup>

From the above contents analysis, it seems that acquiring a relatively higher education, which enabled people to acquire well-paid occupations, was the first criterion of the “elite” in early twentieth century Lagos.<sup>38</sup> The second important criterion was “civilised”, which would suggest proximity to Western civilisation; that is, the financial ability to maintain a Western lifestyle. In addition to the physical aspects—such as occupation, financial situation and education—the mentality of the people, such as a sense of mission as elite, would be another criterion for membership of the “elite”. As will be shown in Chapter 3, the concept of “respectability” was closely connected to the identity of “elite”, and the term “respectable” was used as an adjective to “native” in the same way as “educated” and “civilised” when referring to educated African elite in the Lagos newspapers.<sup>39</sup>

This research adopted the term “educated elite”, despite the fact that “educated native” was more commonly used in the period of this research for two reasons. Firstly, the main actors in this research were people with a relatively high education as well as consciousness of “elite” in the society. Secondly, it seems the term “native” is not appropriately used today, as the meaning changed between the nineteenth and early

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<sup>37</sup> The educate elite were sometimes categorised as “upper class of the society” (LS, 14 April 1897, 2) or “respectable section of the community” (LO, 11 September 1884, 2).

<sup>38</sup> It is necessary to mention that the proportion of the population with a primary education dramatically expanded in the 1920s (see Chapter 2). The people described as “educated natives” might not always have acquired high status in society, however, my examination of the context in which the term “educated native” was discussed in the Lagos newspapers, shows that in the 1910s, the term “educated native” referred to people with a relatively high position in Lagos.

<sup>39</sup> For instance, the *Lagos Standard* complained that the Lagos government railway employed a large number of “educated and respectable Natives of the country” under poor conditions that reduced them “to the category of the ordinary day labourers” (LS, 1 May 1907, 6).

twentieth century.<sup>40</sup>

#### 1.4. Nature of Sources

This section briefly mentions the primary sources for this research. Researching early associational life in colonial Lagos, especially that of secular groups, raises difficult questions. The relevant information, both in governmental papers and in the CMS private papers, two of the most important sources for obtaining information about the social history of Lagos, is scanty. This study focuses on the specific language used in Lagos newspapers to describe associational life, rather than discussing all precise factual information on each association, in order to elucidate what was shared information among the educated elite at the time. Therefore, the Lagos newspapers provide an important source of information. This research focuses on seven English-language newspapers—the *Lagos Times and Gold Coast Colony Advertiser*, the *Eagle and Lagos Critic*, the *Lagos Observer*, the *Lagos Weekly Record*, the *Lagos Standard*, the *Nigerian Chronicle*, and the *Nigerian Pioneer*—which were edited and owned by educated African elite and published fortnightly or weekly in Lagos between 1880 and 1920. It also utilised other newspapers published in Lagos for supplementary information, such as the *Anglo-African*, the *Mirror*, the *Nigerian Times*, the *Times of Nigeria*, and *The Times* published in Britain. All of the above-mentioned newspapers were in the repositories of the University of Birmingham Library and the British Library,

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<sup>40</sup> The usage of the term “native” in Echeruo (1977) suggests that this word “was used primarily to separate the indigene from both the immigrants” (*Saro*) who were the main components of the educated elite in Lagos, “and the Europeans” in the mid-nineteenth century (29). However, it was gradually used to separate Africans (including *Saro*) from Europeans. Today, the term “native” as a noun without qualification is better to be avoided because of its potentially offensive and colonial overtones.

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In addition, this research benefited from “African Newspapers 1800-1922, A World Newspaper Archive Collection” launched in 2010, an expanding online collection that offers access to parts of three Lagos newspapers—the *Lagos Weekly Record*, the *Lagos Standard*, the *Nigerian Pioneer*. This online database enables contents analysis and quantitative research on the African Newspapers to a limited degree.<sup>41</sup> This complemented the examination in this research by providing numerical data on the number of articles on certain topics, or frequencies of certain words in particular periods. Nevertheless, only the detailed study of individual newspapers provides researchers with general information on forms and characteristics of certain newspapers, enabling them to trace changes in the atmosphere of certain periods.

I collected private papers consisting of socio-economic information on the families of J. K. Coker, E. M. Lijadu and Herbart Macaulay in the Nigerian National Archive in Ibadan in 2007; and subsequently, Joseph Ayodokun in Ibadan assisted me in collecting additional materials in 2009. It was regrettable to find the condition of some private papers from the nineteenth century to be in poor condition—worm-eaten or decayed due to humidity—although the collected primary materials in Ibadan served as essential sources for investigating some factual information on the lives of the educated elite in Southern Nigeria. Other sources included the reports of the CMS, publications of the Lagos Colonial Government and the Egba United Board, which also provided

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<sup>41</sup> African Newspapers, 1880-1922, from the World Newspaper Archive, provide 40 fully searchable online newspapers. However, this digital archive has several technical problems. Firstly, the “word search” function in the database cannot detect all the words written in the paper. Secondly, when searching for a certain phrase, the database tends to detect each word separately in the text. For instance, 78 items hit when I searched for “civilised/civilized native” in the *Lagos Standard* between 1907 and 1920, using the word search function of the database, but only 5 of them actually included the phrase “civilized native” (see Table in Appendix 3). The changes of interests of certain newspaper cannot be presumed without examining whole issues of the paper within a certain period.

factual information on the Lagos colony.

### **1.5. The Organisation of the Study**

This section provides an overview of the structure of the thesis and the main arguments in each chapter.

The thesis consists of seven chapters. The first part includes Chapter 1, which sets the scene for the study by introducing the purpose, some historical context and literary background, along with two chapters (Chapters 2 and 3) that discuss the historical background and characteristics of the Lagos press as well as of the educated elite's associational lives, laying the groundwork for the examination of newspaper representations of three types of voluntary associations in the second part.

Chapter 2 provides a chronological overview of seven English-language newspapers, which were published in Nigeria between 1880 and 1920. It examines characteristics of each newspaper, visions of journalists behind their press enterprises and the position of newspapers in a historical context of Lagos society—such as literacy rates, living costs and earnings of the population, as well as the reaction of the Colonial Government toward the local press. Previous studies treated the Lagos newspapers as an organ exclusively for the African educated elite, however, the examination in this chapter will show that Lagos newspapers were not the result of the single effort of their editors, but of collaborative works of editors and various contributors, inside and outside Lagos, that reflected the changing needs of the readers.

Chapter 3 gives an overview of the educated elite's associational life in south western Nigeria between 1880 and 1920. It categorises into seven types the voluntary associations that appeared in the Lagos newspapers—religious associations, recreational

associations, literary societies/educational societies, political and ethnic associations, memorial associations, occupational associations, and associations relating to the British Empire—and provides the reasons for focusing attention, in this thesis, on the latter three categories. It also discusses some useful concepts in examining associational life in colonial Lagos, such as unity, progress and respectability.

The second part comprises Chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7. The first three chapters examine the newspaper articles on memorial associations, industrial and agricultural associations, and associations relating to the British Empire respectively, and Chapter 7 serves as a conclusion of the thesis.

Chapter 4 discusses the newspaper descriptions of memorial associations—such as the Dr. N. T. King’s Memorial Association, the Glover Memorial Fund, the Lady Denton Memorial Committee, Mrs. Sapara Williams Memorial Committee, the Blyden Memorial Committee and the James Johnson Memorial Fund—which were organised for the purpose of perpetuating the memory of great men and women. These commemorative associations can be interpreted as an attempt to make a history of their own, and to share this history with illiterate and partly-literate people by visualising charismatic figures in the form of portraits and tablets. Memorialisation, namely, the act of recording their “own history”, was described in the Lagos press as the essence of “civilised” society, which the Lagos educated elite aimed to achieve. This chapter also considers changes in the form of commemoration in the early twentieth century, including the rising practice of inserting memorial poems in newspapers and the establishment of Memorial Day.

Chapter 5 examines descriptions of industrial and agricultural associations, and related educational institutes—such as Rebecca Hussey Slave Charity Institution, Isaac A. Cole’s Technological Institution, R. B. Blaize’s Memorial Industrial Institute, the

Lagos Agricultural Society and the Agege Planters' Association—whose objective was to support artisans and farmers. From the late nineteenth century, the press began to devote more and more space to discussions on the need for skilled labourers and farmers. This chapter elucidates that there were not only practical issues—such as the poor quality and shortage of skilled labourers, the decline of commercial opportunities and severe competition with European firms—but also an ideological issue behind the press's increasing attention to agriculture and industry. What the press called “moral advantages” of industry and agriculture were closely linked with discussions on how Lagos society should develop in its own way. Skilled artisans and farmers were idealised as examples of the spirit of independence, not requiring an unnecessary “mimicry” of Western society. It was emphasised that if the youths took agricultural and industrial occupations Lagos society could regain self-respect and unity as an African race and eventually achieve suitable “natural” progress.

Chapter 6 deals with newspaper descriptions of public ceremonies of the British Empire in Lagos, such as the Colonial and Indian Exhibition, Queen Victoria's Jubilees and Empire Day celebrations; and of related voluntary associations, as well as, during WWI, war relief fund-raising societies. It shows how these ceremonies and related associational activities influenced the self-perception of Lagos educated elite. This chapter demonstrates how an envisioned framework of the British Empire provided inspiration and an ideological base for the idea of the “oneness of Yoruba” and later Nigeria, with which the Lagos press attempted to encourage social cohesion and the economic improvement of society.

Chapter 7 provides a general conclusion to the whole study by drawing on all the preceding chapters. It concludes that the newspaper descriptions of associational activities were the educated elite's conscious project to lead the future of Lagos toward



a unified and civilised society in the African way. The chapter also evaluates the contributions and limitations of the research, and finally suggests areas for future research.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> It is worthy of note that literature reviews of studies relating to Chapters 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6—the early Lagos newspapers, the educated elite’s associational activities in Lagos, memorialisation in southern Nigeria, agriculture and industry in Lagos, and the ceremonies and voluntary associations relating to the British Empire respectively—will be presented separately in each chapter.

## CHAPTER 2

### HISTORY OF NEWSPAPERS IN COLONIAL LAGOS 1880-1920

#### 2.1. Introduction

In this chapter, a chronological overview of selected English-language newspapers, published in Nigeria between 1880 and 1920, is provided. This was the period when the “Nigerian Press” was almost synonymous with the Lagos press, as high levels of literacy were almost confined to Lagos and the surrounding area. This chapter not only illustrates background knowledge relating to Lagos newspapers, the main source of this research on associational activities in colonial Lagos, but also seeks to present, in an historical context, some new perspectives on the changing characteristics and roles of Lagos newspapers, as well as the visions of journalists behind their ambitious but often unprofitable press enterprises.

Previous studies have treated the Lagos press as an organ exclusively for the African educated elite, and have examined editors’ views as an important factor defining the stands of each press, focusing attention on the impact of the press on the rise of nationalist movements from the twentieth century (Coker 1968; Omu 1978; Duyile 1987). However, by focusing more on changes in the form and experimental aspects of the contents of newspapers—including the 1880s papers and the culture-oriented *Nigerian Chronicle*, which have been examined to a lesser degree previously—as well as on the newspapers’ position in society, this chapter highlights the following three points.

Firstly, it seems the Lagos newspapers went through some changes, relating to editors' views, the colonial situation and the "envisioned" readership. From the 1880s, the African-initiated newspapers flourished, partly because, from the 1870s onwards, the liberated Africans, or their descendants who acquired printing training in Christian missions, had begun to establish their own printing presses (for instance, R. B. Blaize), and also because those who had had training in Sierra Leone or in the Gold Coast had returned to Lagos in search of opportunities (for instance, James Bright Davies). In addition, the growing presence of the British Colonial Government motivated the establishment of newspapers, which were the only medium in which Africans could express their opinions. Regarding the 1880s newspapers, apart from some differences of opinion stemming from editors' ethnic backgrounds, they had sympathetic relationships with each other. They also had some common characteristics, often writing in the decorative and elaborate style of the English, and providing detailed descriptions of the educated elite's social lives to satisfy the readers' desires to publicise their respectability and wealth.

The establishment of the *Lagos Weekly Record* in the 1890s has been discussed in the context of growing opposition to the Colonial Government regime, and the increasing anti-African prejudice in Christian missions and public sectors that caused the educated elite to be excluded from high positions. However, this chapter also suggests the importance of the *Lagos Standard* with its relatively domestic focus. The launch of the culture-oriented *Nigerian Chronicle* in 1908 reflects the gradual change in the "envisioned" readers of the Lagos press. The dissemination of primary education expanded the possible readership of the newspapers from limited numbers of highly educated elite to less-educated literate (often young) people. Consequently, the Lagos

press began to strengthen its role as educator of the people.

From 1914 onwards, a gulf emerged between the pro-British press (the *Nigerian Pioneer*) and other locally oriented newspapers. This reflected growing political friction within the educated elite. The proto-nationalists resisted rising racialism and expressed resentment for some policies of the British Colonial Government, such as the proposal relating to water rate tax in 1908 and 1915, and land tenure in 1912; these issues divided the educated elite into pro-and anti-British factions (Cole 1975).

Moreover, we will see the increasing focus of the press on inland Nigeria and the expansion of agencies in Northern and Southern Nigeria in the early twentieth century. The establishment of the political framework of Nigeria created the idea of one nation in the territory called “Nigeria”. In addition, the growing control of the Colonial Government caused the educated elite to consider strengthening the ties between the educated African elite and other sections of society, resulting in what later came to be frequently referred to as one unified “indigenous society”.

The second point relates to consistencies in Lagos newspapers throughout the period. Newspaper enterprises were often unprofitable, and editors lamented the paucity of public interest in the press and lack of readership. However, the Lagos newspapers had a strong sense of mission, assuming responsibility as “representatives” of “civilised” Lagosians and educators of the people, for leading society in its quest for “progress”. Despite the difficulties, this sense of mission provided the motivation for newspapermen to continue their business, as will be presented in more detail in the following chapters.

Thirdly, the Lagos newspapers were not a result of the single effort of their editors. Not only did they contain the news and editorial articles written by the editor(s), but also letters from readers and reports from their own correspondents in the hinterland

of Lagos and other British colonies of West Africa and, occasionally, from England. In addition, the Lagos press consistently published excerpts from newspapers from Sierra Leone, the Gold Coast, England, and sometimes from other European countries and America.

From Section 1 to Section 6 of this chapter, the characteristics of the main Lagos newspapers, between 1880 and 1920, will be chronologically detailed. Section 2 examines the earliest newspapers of the 1860s, especially on the *Anglo-African*, which had an experimental approach to its content, as well as three 1880s newspapers—the *Lagos Times and Gold Coast Colony Advertiser*, the *Lagos Observer* and the *Eagle and Lagos Critic*. Section 3 deals with the *Lagos Weekly Record* and the *Lagos Standard*, two newspapers initiated in the 1890s. Section 4 demonstrates the reactions of the African-initiated Lagos newspapers towards the press regulations imposed by the Colonial Government from 1903 onwards. Sections 5 and 6 explore two “Nigerian” newspapers in particular—the cultural-oriented *Nigerian Chronicle*; and the *Nigerian Pioneer*, an ardent follower of the British—as well as examining the increasing rivalry among the press.

These sections focus on the proprietors and editors of each of the selected Lagos newspapers, their opinions in the press, methods for publishing and collecting news articles, newspaper formats and experimental columns, as well as the press regulations of the British Government. The sections reveal active interactions between the Lagos press and newspapers in other parts of British West Africa, and the gradual transition from its West African coastal focus towards the rest of Nigeria. What is more, they show that the newspapers were the collaborative works of editors and various contributors, both inside and outside Lagos.

Section 7 presents the actual situations of newspaper ventures in Lagos, described as unprofitable enterprises, during the period 1880-1920. As will be shown, the revenue of the press, as well as information about readership, literacy rates and the cost of living in Lagos, is helpful for assessing newspapers as an investment opportunity at that time. This section concludes that the motivation for the newspapermen to continue their papers, despite the difficulties of their press enterprises, was a strong sense of mission, as representatives of public opinion and leaders of society (and some expectations of gaining name-recognition for themselves). Lastly, section 8 summarises the chapter and provides an overview of the production of newspaper texts in colonial Lagos between 1880 and 1920.

## **2.2. The Establishment of Lagos Newspapers**

Publication history in Western Nigeria began in 1854, when Rev. Henry Townsend (1815-1866), the founder of the CMS Yoruba mission, set up a press at Abeokuta to produce service sheets and hymn pamphlets.<sup>43</sup> His brother was a newspaper publisher and printer in Exeter, and Henry brought an old printing-press (hand press) to Abeokuta as part of his efforts to set up industrial training. In 1859, Rev. Henry Townsend founded *Iwe Irohin Fun Awon ara Egba ati Yoruba* (meaning newspaper for the Egba and Yoruba), with the collaboration of bilingual *Saro*, and sold it for 120 cowries per copy. *Iwe Irohin* was a fortnightly newspaper, which began as a vernacular paper in the Yoruba language only. The English supplement was added the

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<sup>43</sup> The Presbyterian Church of Scotland mission was the first to bring a printing press to Nigeria, arriving in Calabar (East Nigeria) in 1846 and publishing elementary arithmetic sheets, primers and other religious pamphlets — both in Efik and English (Ajayi [1965] 1969a, 158-59; Omu 1978, 7).

following year, and from 1866, it became Africa's first bi-lingual newspaper when it began publishing separate editions in English and Yoruba. It usually included eight-page reports on religious matters, such as the movement of ministers, as well as on the political developments of the time, including expeditions and inter-tribal wars. It ceased publication in 1867 due to the civil disruption between the Ibadan and Egba traders at Abeokuta, which eventually led to the expulsion of all Europeans from Egbaland (Coker 1968, 1-4; Ajayi [1965] 1969a, 158-59; Omu 1978, 7).

Before the destruction of Townsend's press during the Egba Rising of 1867, another newspaper, the *Anglo-African*, appeared in Lagos. It was owned and edited by Robert Campbell (1829-1884),<sup>44</sup> a West Indian mulatto who settled in Lagos. He invited printers from the CMS press at Abeokuta and began to print and sell his newspaper for 3 pence each week from June 1863, until December 1865 (Ajayi [1965] 1969a, 158-59; Duyile 1987, 29-33). The *Anglo-African* contained an average of four pages and included news on Lagos, Abeokuta and overseas. In consideration of its format, one page was vertically divided into three parts, a method which all subsequent 1880-1920 Lagos newspapers, except for the *Nigerian Times* (1910-1911), adopted. The front page contained a few legal- and Government-related notices, whereas the last page occasionally carried advertisements of medicines. The paper also carried various excerpts from foreign publications, which showed Campbell's extensive reading (Brown 1964, 273-275). Despite the fact that previous studies have paid only passing attention to the *Anglo-African* as the forerunner of the Nigerian press, its contents have the distinguishing feature of devoting significant space—one to two pages out of

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<sup>44</sup> Robert Campbell was born in Jamaica, of a mulatto mother and a Scottish father. He worked as an apprentice printer for five years and entered the teachers' training institute to become a schoolteacher in his home town. In 1859-60, he joined Dr. Martin R. Delany's Yorubaland tour with the aim of founding a Negro colony, and settled in Lagos for the next 22 years, as a journalist, manufacturer, merchant and administrator (Omu 1978).

four—to stories which were occasionally instructive or religious but, which also more often than not, were intended for the mere entertainment of the readers.<sup>45</sup> Moreover, the paper carried at least one poem per issue.

For instance, Campbell serialised a tale entitled, “We Four Villagers”, which was inserted from 18 July 1863, for at least five months.<sup>46</sup> This didactic tale was written in the form of retrospection and was narrated by Mrs. Dorothy Dorane on various events. Mrs. Dorane—along with her three best friends—had lived in a small village called Silveryville in America, and reported on the suffering and distress of Minnie Emgreen, one of her best friends, whose husband turned out to be alcoholic. Although some subscribers complained that local news was of more importance than this serialised tale, the editor nevertheless actively stressed its merit as “presenting, in vivid colours the evils of intemperance... for the sake of our young men”, and, besides, he argued, it would provide “a most lucid insight of life in America” to readers (12 September 1863, 3).

Between 1867, when the *Iwe Irohin* ceased publication, and 1880, there was no newspaper published in the territory which is today known as Nigeria. After twelve years’ lull in terms of journalistic activity, one newspaper, named the *Lagos Times and Gold Coast Colony Advertiser*, led the re-blossoming of the Nigerian press. This particular paper was launched by Richard Beale Blaize (1845-1906), one of the most prominent and wealthy businessmen in nineteenth-century Lagos. Like other editors in the advent period of the Lagos press, he was *Saro*, born in Sierra Leone of Oyo and

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<sup>45</sup> Apart from the issues published in the last half of 1865, almost all copies of the *Anglo-African* carried certain essays or stories. The followings are examples of tales: “Power of Kindness”(19 September 1863), “The Cost-Guardian’s tale” (30 July 1863), “An Unpleasant Dream” (31 December 1865).

<sup>46</sup> “We Four Villagers” reached up to Chapter 16 on 5 December 1863 and the story was to be continued, however, no copy of the *Anglo-African* between 5 December 1863 and 30 July 1864 is available today.



Egba parents. He came to Lagos in 1862 and was employed the following year as a workman in the office of the *Anglo-African*. After its discontinuance of publication in 1865, Blaize became a government printer in Lagos until 1874 and eventually established his own Caxton Printing Press in 1875. The *Lagos Times* appeared twice a month and was sold to subscribers for 6 pence and to non-subscribers for 9 pence between the period of 10 November 1880, and 24 October 1883. The paper was edited and printed at its own printing establishment on Broad Street by Andrew M. Thomas, who later began publishing his own newspaper, called *Iwe Irohin Eko* from 1888. Rev. Mojola Agbebi (1860-1917)<sup>47</sup> occasionally assisted in editing the *Lagos Times*. The paper was, on average, four pages long, and half of the space was occupied by advertisements. Although it held the words “Gold Coast” in its title, the paper almost exclusively focused on Lagos affairs, much like other nineteenth century newspapers (Kopytoff 1965, 283-284; Echeruo 1977, 6; Omu 1978, 23 & 29-30).<sup>48</sup>

As well as news on education, commerce, church affairs, interior countries and the political administration of Lagos, the *Lagos Times* always accorded religion an important place in its columns, believing that it was “the chief instrument that should be employed to promote the advancement of a nation, and that God honours the people that honour Him” (9 November 1881, 2). The first issue of this paper in 1880 highlighted editors’ strong sense of duty, which remained fundamental for the self-perception of all newspapermen in Lagos:

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<sup>47</sup> Rev. Mojola Agbebi assisted several Lagos newspapers as editor and correspondent, including the *Lagos Times*, the *Lagos Observer*, *Iwe Irohin Eko*, and the *Lagos Weekly Record* (Gwam 1967, 31-35; Omu 1978).

<sup>48</sup> Since annexation in 1861, the government of Lagos colony was placed under West African Settlements between 1866 and 1873, then subsequently, from 1874 to 1885, under the Gold Coast Colony. During the publication period of the *Lagos Times and Gold Coast Colony Advertiser*, Lagos Colony was politically and administratively incorporated with the Gold Coast. In January 1886, the Colony of Lagos was detached from the Gold Coast (Coleman 1958, 42).

The Press is the safeguard of public rights: it is the messenger of truth—the herald of science—the interpreter of letters—the amanuensis of history—and the teacher of futurity. Like the sun, it illuminates the gloom of Gothic night—irradiates the shades of ignorance—and pours a flood of knowledge in the world—It dilates the perceptions of man—extends his intellectual vision—inspires his heart with sensibility and mind with thought—and endows him with past and present omniscience (LT, 10 November 1880, 2).

Blaize began the publication of paper with the high hope of influencing not only the literate portions of the community but also local traditional rulers and people in the interior. Looking back to the first year of its enterprise, the editor stated that the purpose of the paper was as follows:

It is now twelve months since we introduced our Paper to the notice of the public, hoping thereby to... provide for the people a respectable channel for the expression of their views on matters of public interest, and thus contribute towards the growth of an independent and honourable national manhood... Our object is to promote the real welfare of the people and country, and the influence of the Government [the British colonial Authorities] whose privilege it is whilst directing the affairs of this Island, to exercise a considerable amount of moral influence over the native Governments [local rulers] and people in the interior countries, and thus indirectly help to elevate their ideas and improve their conditions (LT, 9 November 1881, 2).<sup>49</sup>

The paper had agencies in London, Cape Coast, Little Popo, Benin and Fernando Po,<sup>50</sup> and had a circulation of 250 fortnightly (6,500 annually); however, it encountered

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<sup>49</sup> In this thesis, square brackets inside quotations are inserted by the author in order to add supplementary information or translation of the word before.

<sup>50</sup> List of the Commercial Agencies of the *Lagos Observer*

England—Messrs Thomas Morgan & Son, 11 New Street Bishopsgate Street London;

Cape Coast—J. M. K. Davies, Esq;

Little Popo, Quittah and Whydah—G. A. Metzger, Esq;

financial difficulties from increased competition, and briefly ended its run in 1883. In spite of the fact that the paper reappeared again in December 1890, it finally ceased its publication in October 1891.

The *Lagos Times* set the standard in design for Lagos newspapers. The format of dedicating the front and back pages to advertisements<sup>51</sup> was applied to all Lagos newspapers until the year 1926, when the *Nigerian Daily Times*<sup>52</sup> broke this tradition and moved advertisements to the inside pages (Omu 1978, 87).

The second paper of the 1880s was the *Lagos Observer*, which was established in February 1882 by J. Blackall Benjamin,<sup>53</sup> a liberated African who originally worked as an assistant agent for a British firm—Walsh & Brothers—and then as an auctioneer. His journalistic enterprise was assisted by Dr. N. T. King and Robert Campbell, Chairman of the Editorial Supervision Committee, until the death of both in 1884. The paper was printed at the *Lagos Observer*'s printing office on Bishop Street. The *Observer* had

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Quittah and Benin—Theodore Hilliard, Esq;

Fernando Po—L. Cuniia, Esq.

<sup>51</sup> Commercial advertisements often appeared on the front page, but in rare cases, government and legal notices were also inserted. Notices for births, deaths, marriages, changes of name and removal of offices and dwellings were often included in middle-page or back-page advertisements. From the beginning of the twentieth century, it became more common to insert one-sentence-notices of birth and death not on the pages of advertisement but in small spaces between news articles. News of the arrival and departure of “important figures” and notices of entertainments were often included in special columns, such as “Miscellaneous” or “Local News” in the *Lagos Times*, “News Items” or General News” in the *Lagos Observer*, “De Omnibus Rebus” in the *Eagle and Lagos Critics*, “Epitome of News” in the *Lagos Weekly Record*, “News of the Week” in the *Nigerian Chronicle*, “Rambling Notes & News” in the *Nigerian Pioneer*.

<sup>52</sup> The *Nigerian Daily Times* was launched by the Nigerian Printing & Publishing Co. Ltd in June 1926 as the second daily newspaper in Nigeria. The paper was edited first by E. S. Ikoli, himself a publisher of his own weekly paper called the *African Messenger* between 1921 and 1928 (Coker 1968; Omu 1978, 61-64 & 253).

<sup>53</sup> Regarding the identity of the editor of the *Lagos Observer*, there are two possibilities—one is J. Blackall Benjamin (Omu 1978, 30) and the other is J. Bagan Benjamin (Coker 1968, 9; Omu 1978, 33 & 38). J. B. Benjamin, was said to have worked as an auctioneer (Coker 1968, 9) and in 1916, a letter to the *Lagos Standard* mentioned “J. Blackall Benjamin, father of our noble Civil Engineer J. Bagan Benjamin” as one of the oldest auctioneers in Lagos (LS, 18 October 1916, 6). Therefore, it seems J. Blackall Benjamin was the one who initiated the *Lagos Observer*.

three agents in England—London, Manchester and Liverpool—and seven in West Africa—Cape Coast, Elmina, Accra, Addah, Quitta, Fernando Po and Porto Novo (12 April 1883, 1). Between 100 and 480 copies were sold fortnightly at a price of 5 pence each until 12 July 1890; the longest period of circulation amongst all nineteenth-century Lagos newspapers. This comprised six pages on average, more than its contemporaries, and it was more politically aggressive than the others.

The *Observer* introduced columns providing characteristics of contemporary Lagos society, which are of interest from an ethnographical perspective. The columns were called “By the Way” and “Tit Bits”,<sup>54</sup> designed by the editor to be “new features in journalism on the West Coast”. They were inserted for the sole purpose of exposing “social and public evil”, and reflected the editor’s focus on reform. Benjamin was also pleased to record that some of the “urgent requirements” that the paper had brought to the attention of the Colonial Government, such as the construction of a “meat market and the Isale Garden and Idumagbo bridges”, had become realities (LO, 1 February 1883, 4).

“By the Way” was a column written in the first person about small news items in Lagos. Typical of this column is the following extract: “Lagos is dull enough we know, but I trust the arrival of ladies from England who are expected will enliven the monotony” (20 July 1882, 4). No relating news was found in this issue, but it seems that the editor assumed the readers would be able to guess to whom this entry referred.

“Tit-Bits” encompassed more experimental aspects. It was normally situated at the end of all the news articles, and just before back-page advertisements. It contained

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<sup>54</sup> “Tit Bits” may be an echo of the title of a popular British weekly newspaper of that name, started in 1881 by George Newnes and published until 1984.

criticisms of the Government in the form of questions, advice to individuals,<sup>55</sup> didactic knowledge<sup>56</sup> and proverbs, as well as comments on certain issues that every reader already seemed to be familiar with, meaning there was no necessity to explain in detail:

WILLIAM—Why quarrel and perjure yourself on a bit of land? “The Earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof” (20 July 1882, 4).

Mozart—Why did you run away from the baptism of your newly born infant?

B—Your ambition knows no bounds; persevere, for success will always lead to success (29 March 1883, 4).

It seems “Tit-Bits” provided the readers with information or news that had already been shared among them, using nicknames, initials or first names of particular individuals, so that the readers could easily assume to whom the sentence was referring. The first sentence to “William” suggests that biblical knowledge was either something that had been shared by readers, or was considered essential for readers. Reading these submissions would enable the readers to recall particular individuals with a land problem (“William”), a family problem (“Mozart”), and perhaps one considered too voracious in his business at the time (“B”).

This column also served as the editor’s communicative tool for the readers of Lagos and, sometimes, those of other British West African countries (6 April 1882, 4; 29 March 1883, 4). In 1882, the *Observer* posed five questions in “Tit-Bits”, under the title of “Things I would like to Know” and, in the next issue, it published the answers to

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<sup>55</sup> The *Observer* expressed their complaint about the quality of the sermons delivered by one preacher: “S.P., the preacher of Olowogbowo Chapel—Is decorum beyond the range of pulpit oratory, or is the Yoruba devoid of becoming expressions? Your very uncourtly language is offensive to your hearers—it is the out-come of fanaticism [sic] or vain spasmodic zeal. Learn from your brother C. B. to make yourself intelligible without being disgusting: copy your benefactors and your ministry will be successful” (LO, 29 March 1883, 4).

<sup>56</sup> “Partings are painful, reunions pleasant. The hopes alone of the latter, can reconcile us. Never will, with the farewell ordeal through which we must soon pass. Our experience of you, both in your official and private capacity is, that you are a gentleman, a faithful servant, and our ideal *bon vivant* [a person who enjoys life]” (LO, 16 March 1882, 4).

those questions as sent in by readers (20 April 1882, 4). As the answer to the first question—Why are ladies so inquisitive?—the editor “gladly awarded the prize to Mrs M.”, who replied, “Because they are daughters of Eve”. The editor said her answer represented the lesson that if there had not been “curiosity so well developed in the gentler sex” that had caused Eve to taste “one apple”, then “humanity... would have been saved the untold miseries and woes” (4 May 1882, 4). This line suggests that the readers were familiar with the biblical image of Eve. These columns indicate the mood of the Lagos elite community.

Furthermore, “Tit-Bits” occasionally served as a communication tool for newspapers in other parts of British West Africa, such as Sierra Leone and the Gold Coast. In 1882, for instance, it requested a correction of one article in the *Gold Coast Times* and wrote: “My dear Correspondent of the *Gold Coast Times*. The Chiefs never did nor say anything of the sort to the Governor in Chief. Come, draw it mild: The *Gold Coast Times* is a respectable journal, let your informations [sic] then be accurate” (4 May 1882, 4).

Another experimental column of the *Lagos Observer* was “Keep Your Own Side of the Way”, which was written by its Lagos correspondent. Colloquial expressions were frequently used to appeal to the readers. On the Golden Jubilee of Queen Victoria, for example, the writer attempted to create interest amongst the people in Lagos by exhorting them to think seriously about their reaction to the Jubilee:

What! Is the jubilee of the reign of Her Most gracious Majesty Queen Victoria to pass unheeded? And are we to remain hopelessly inactive when other colonies are vigorously contesting the celebration of the jubilee of Her Majesty’s reign in the most belittling manner? Will Lagos be content in receiving an everlasting reproach for want of reciprocation in this universal move, and can she be content to remain on the background in the celebration of the jubilee of a reign, under

which she arose from chaotic heathenism and superstitions right to the summit of that prominence whence to-day the world looks admirably upon her promising and fair proportions? O! Lagosians and people of the Lagos Colony, dare we be silent and remain inactive? Can we suppress the exuberance of spirits which the coming event promises to afford? It would be impossible, absolutely impossible! The jubilee should be celebrated (18 September & 2 October 1886, 2).

The writer of this column pointed out the shameful indifference of Lagosians to the Jubilee, comparing them with other colonies of the British Empire, and tried to invoke the readers' pride as Lagosians who could improve their status amongst other civilised societies.

The *Observer* was the first newspaper to have paved the way to enriching contents of newspapers during early colonial Lagos. The paper contained not only the news and editorial articles as written by its editor, but also columns written by various other contributors. The *Observer* had their special correspondents in Ondo, Abeokuta, Addah, Freetown, Cape Coast, Quittah, Port Novo, Accra and Little Popo. Articles on entertainments were written by "REMESES" or "CHERUBINO". The experimental columns—such as "Tit-Bits" and "By the Way"—frequently appeared in the papers. The editor of the *Observer* also inserted excerpts from other newspapers in West Africa and Britain—such as the *Sierra Leone Weekly News*,<sup>57</sup> the *Gold Coast Times*,<sup>58</sup> the *London Gazette*, the *African Times*<sup>59</sup> and *The Times*—and letters from readers, using pseudonyms such as "Africanus", "Owuyeh", "A Native" and "An Aku Man".

The *Observer*, in 1887, lamented the paucity of people's awareness of

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<sup>57</sup> The *Sierra Leone Weekly News* was launched by Joseph Claudius May (1845-1902), a Methodist preacher, in 1884 and continued its publication for over 60 years until 1951 (Wyse 1989, 43).

<sup>58</sup> J. H. Brew started the *Gold Coast Times* at Cape Coast in 1874. It ceased in 1885, but was revived in 1923 and continued to publish until 1940 (Ainslie 1966, 23).

<sup>59</sup> The *African Times* established from 1861 in London by the African Aid Society (Omu 1978, 11).

“importance” of newspapers in Lagos, which was the gauge of “intelligence of people” and “civilization” in certain society and wrote: “Whereas in Europe the poorest beggar would be happy to spend his penny in order to be informed on passing events of the day, in Lagos and other portions of this coast, many men in shame, would be most unwilling to subscribe to local periodicals” (2 & 16 April 1887, 2). Three year later, in 1890, the *Observer* was ultimately forced to cease publication after eight years in the running.<sup>60</sup>

The *Eagle and Lagos Critic* followed, which was published monthly and sometimes fortnightly, on Odunlami Street, and had a cover price of 6 pence for subscribers and 7 pence for non-subscribers. It started printing in March 1883, and ended its run in October 1888. During its five-year run, it was patronised by Government-related advertisements and had a pro-governmental approach. The paper was edited and owned by Owen Emerick Macaulay, grandson of Ajayi Crowther and brother of Herbert Macaulay. Owen Macaulay considered newspapers to be “the legitimate and recognized mouth-piece of the community” (E&LC, 31 May 1884, 3), and he accordingly established his own paper with “a desideratum to express the other side of a question” and “requisite to balance opinions when they are in opposition” as the third newspaper in Lagos (31 March 1883, 1). The paper was entitled *Eagle and Lagos Critic*, and had the high hope of being fearless with acute observations—like an eagle; however, it often expressed rather pro-British Government tendencies and rarely had the attributes of an eagle or the resources of a critic (Omu 1978, 30).<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> In 1894, Benjamin revived the *Lagos Observer* under the name of the *Lagos Echo*. Although information on the newspaper is scant, the *Blue Book of Lagos Colony* reported its circulation from 1894-1897 as 400-520 weekly (20,800 to 27,040 annually).

<sup>61</sup> What Owen Macaulay referred to as “legitimate” and “balanced”, opinion is seen description of Ajasa Affair in 1884. Since 1872, Ajasa had been the Apena (spokesman) of the Eleko Dosumu (traditional king of Lagos between 1853 and 1885), and worked as a traditional chief justice in Lagos. However, Ajasa’s increasing power frightened Dosumu who had been assisted by the British Colonial Government to maintain order. Ajasa requested Dosumu to allow him to



The *Eagle* also provides us with accurate descriptions of elite social life in late nineteenth century Lagos, with the depictions of “fashionable” weddings, “fancy ball” parties, concerts, picnics, tea parties and sports. The percentage of the articles on particular individuals is higher than the later period. For instance, as will be referred to in detail in Chapter 4, one can find some commemorative activities for T. B. Macaulay, Owen’s own father, in the *Eagle*.

Another feature of the *Eagle* is that it retained a significantly optimistic view of newspapers’ possibilities and their futures, although contemporary editors had a consensus on unsatisfactory sales and the unfavourable attitude of people towards the press. In 1885, Owen Macaulay was pleased to note that “the influence of literature is continually increasing; through the Press and the spread of education in its sphere is becoming indefinitely enlarged”. The reading of newspapers had become not “the privilege of few” but “one of the chief pleasures [sic] of the majority”. “Journalists and Editors” were “the royal rulers of their fellowmen” who would be praised as “the truest benefactors of mankind” in the near future. The editor showed his positive view regarding the high potentiality of the press to exercise power in the society, and believed that the public would share its views:

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go to England to sue Queen Victoria for the return of Lagos. He went to England but was not even given a hearing (Cole 1975, 29-44). On his return from England in 1884, he was accused of conspiracy relating to overthrowing the British Colonial Government and Dosumu, and in September 1884, was consequently deported from Lagos with four other chiefs and consigned to a jail in Accra without trial (E&LC, 25 October 1884, 2-3). This event evoked strong agitations of the public. Ajasa was freed and returned to Lagos the following year. The *Observer* criticised the Colonial Government and proclaimed that this regrettable event did not help to solve the situation, but rather “increased their criminality and audacious defiance of the supremacy of the Queen’s Government” (8 October 1885, 2). However, the *Eagle* showed its belief in justice of the Colonial Government when stating: “We hesitate not [sic] say that the charges must be great and serious, otherwise, His Excellency’s responsibility is very great, and for a gentleman of such extensive experience in native affairs and the government of West Africa, we may safely assert that his action is not without some substantial basis” (25 October 1884, 3).

In all civilized countries, the Press holds a very distinguished position and is a most powerful factor in the Governmental, Social, and Intellectual life of the people. All who are well acquainted with the history of modern Europe, must admit the potency of the Press in moulding the character and developing the manhood of all who avail themselves of its advantages... A popular author [in England] has... remarked—"Let me make the Newspapers, and I care not who makes the religion or laws." Another writer displayed great capacity and insight when he wrote:—I would rather live in a country with newspapers and without a government, than in a country with a government but without newspapers... By encouraging the circulation of our Newspapers... Grand improvements will be accomplished in social order, in domestic life, in public feeling and enterprise, and in the value of religion, all tending to introduce higher influences which must contribute to the purity, happiness, and glory of our colony (E&LC, 14 March 1885, 4).

The editor continued by stating that he believed the day would soon come when:

The manly mechanic with his bag of tools, the busy Weaver trotting to the loom, the thoughtful clerk with his note of parchment under his arm, and men of every condition and grade may be seen intently perusing the columns of their silent Morning Messengers, eagerly devouring the latest intelligence from home and abroad (E&LC, 14 March 1885, 4).

The three Lagos newspapers launched in the 1880s, as mentioned above, seem to have some common characteristics. One is their "pompous and long-winded" writing style: for instance, papers were occupied by tremendous amounts of "deliberately and self-consciously elaborate" essays on weddings, concerts and "at homes" (parties or receptions at home) by the educated elite (Echeruo 1977, 8-9). The *Observer* in 1882 recommended that the correspondents write in a simple and clear style, as simplicity in a composition "is far more elegant than an elaborate straining at rhetorical effect" (28

September 1882, 2). The letter from “AMICUS” to the *Eagle* suggested that readers agreed with the view on simplicity of writing:

A community such as ours will be enlightened and benefited not by any high bombastic style in which a paper would deem it proper to express itself to the public, not by its wearisome and lengthy articles, but a short and compact form is preferable, written in a clear, readable and Queen’s English style (28 April 1883, 3).

Despite these claims, the nineteenth century press nevertheless retained their decorative and elaborate style: with their style of writing, even the most trivial of events were described as grand and dramatic matters in the society. We can see the verbose description in the article below on the Macaulay Memorial Concert in 1883. Before reporting the actual concert, the writer included a long introduction:

The votaries of the Muses can hardly be debarred now-a-days from doing homage to that source of infinite pleasure in their merry moments, of consolation, when the heart is sad, of inspiration, when the mind is inclined to better things—however inclement the day, people will go to witness indifferent performances, much more readily will they go, when they have reasons to expect something good, like that at the Breadfruit School-room, on the evening of the 8<sup>th</sup> instant, for the purpose of raising funds to create a memorial worthy of the late Rev. T. B. Macaulay, on whom devolved the sublime task of inaugurating the higher education of the future generation of this island, and who performed his task faithfully and devotedly (LO, 21 June 1883, 3).

What is more, there was a significant historical shift at the time of early Lagos newspapers; that is, the change in the usage of the term “Yoruba” and the early Lagos press played an important role in the gradual construction of a pan-Yoruba identity. As

well as topics relating to the British colonial administration in Lagos, church affairs and education, “interior difficulties”, i.e. the conflicts between interior ethnic groups in Yorubaland and mediations by the Lagos Colonial Government, was frequently taken up in the papers. As will be explored in Chapter 6, in the early 1880-Lagos newspapers, the term “Yoruba” was used in the meaning of “Oyo” (as it was originally a Hausa word to describe inhabitants of Oyo), as well as “Yoruba language”; however, the word gradually came to be used more frequently with a “pan-Yoruba” meaning, which included several ethnic groups in Yorubaland (the south-western region of Nigeria), such as Ijebu, Egba, Ijesha, Ekiti, Ife, Oyo and so on.

With regards to the Yoruba language, there had been constant claims which encouraged vernacular education and publications, especially after the cultural revival of the 1880s in Lagos. After Yoruba orthography was established by the collaborative work of European and *Saro* missionaries, as well as linguists in England and Germany from the early 1840s,<sup>62</sup> the Yoruba alphabet gradually became common in use in 1860s Lagos (Brown 1964, 272; Ajayi [1965] 1969a, 126-28). There were said to be certain feelings of contempt toward the Yoruba language amongst educated Africans in early colonial Lagos: the Yoruba language was regarded as inappropriate for “respectable society”, and speaking Yoruba in public was regarded as “uncivilised” (Omu 1978, 110). Concurrently, as from the early colonial period, the necessity of publications in the

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<sup>62</sup> The development of Yoruba language in written form was initiated by European missionaries such as Rev. Townsend, Rev. Henry Venn, Revs. J. F. Schön, John Raban, and C. A. Gollmer, with the significant assistance of *Saro* missionaries like Rev. Samuel Ajayi Crowther and Thomas King. Notable examples of the *Saro* pioneers in early Yoruba orthography are Rev. Samuel Ajayi Crowther (c.1806/09-1891) who was a rescued slave, educated in Freetown and England, and later worked as Anglican CMS bishop in Lagos and Abeokuta, and Thomas King (?-1862) who was Egba recaptive and worked for the CMS as a catechist in Abeokuta from the 1850s (Kopytoff 1965, 291). Crowther translated parts of the New Testament with the assistance of Thomas King and published *Grammar and Vocabulary of the Yoruba Language* in 1843 (Ajayi [1965] 1969a, 126-28; Falola 1999, 6-7).

vernacular was recognised, and a “Publications Committee [of the CMS] was established in 1879 to promote the printing of useful books” in Yoruba language (Brown 1964, 275).

Consequently, there was an upsurge in debates surrounding vernacular education in 1882 when the educational code became a vital topic for the Lagos press.<sup>63</sup> Both Yoruba and English language education were held to be as important, but in different ways. While acquisition of English language was necessary in formal sectors and in commerce, Yoruba was the “mother tongue” of many Lagosians (LO, 16 August 1883, 2). According to one letter to the *Observer*, the “English language is the language of civilisation: it is the language of books, and the Yoruba is the language of the land” (8 November 1883, 3).<sup>64</sup> What should be pointed out is that not all educated elite had high literacy in Yoruba. For instance, in 1886, a letter by “Hamlet” to the *Observer* exposed people’s unsatisfactory command of their “mother tongue”. Despite the fact the Abeokuta Patriotic Society published its second yearly report, “Hamlet” mentioned that it would “not be extensively read or adequately appreciated” because the report was printed “solely in the Yoruba Language” (7 August 1886, 3). Discussions on Yoruba language education and the rehabilitation of Yoruba culture were held among limited numbers of cultural nationalist educated elite, and others sought opportunity of acquiring English language.

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<sup>63</sup> The Education Ordinance in 1882 was to systematise grant-in-aid to mission schools, receiving financial assistance from the Colonial Government. It stated special stipends would be awarded to organisations on the basis of enrolment and the results of examination by English language (Awoniyi 1975). The lack of a vernacular language in the curriculum provoked strong opposition within Lagos society (Cole 1975, 51-52; Echeruo 1977, 55-56; Omu 1978, 107).

<sup>64</sup> Similar discussions on relation of English and Yoruba language can be found in the editorial titled “The Literature of the Colony” which wrote: “The English language is to-day the vehicle of thought for about a third of the human race...To speak and understand English you are introduced to a universe of literature from which and through the knowledge of which a variety of literature could be constructed from Yoruba Land” (LS, 22 January 1896, 3).

In addition, as there had been no vernacular newspaper following the collapse of the *Iwe Irohin* in 1867, there were constant debates about the necessity of a Yoruba language newspaper from the early 1880s. A letter by “Aborigines” in 1882 suggested the reason for the *Lagos Times*’ failure “to wield any influence on ourselves the mass of Lagos people”, was that the paper merely wrote “wholly and solely in English”, which “has very little or no power over *Native minds*”. The writer continued:

so we must acknowledge that it is only in our mother tongue that our hearts can be moved. The time is now come, when, as in India and other countries, the “Anglo-vernacular,” if not entirely Vernacular, should be recognized to be the leading power which can wield any influence and ensure success in this country; therefore the Vernacular should have its important place in the curriculum of our schools... If these be true, then Mr. Editor, allow me to ask you most kindly to give it a trial on your highly esteemed Press... If even you cannot give us the whole Paper in Yoruba, give us, I beg of you, *two* of the *six* inner columns to inform our Native reading community of great concerns in political matters...and of what is transpiring in our country. Mr. Editor, although the last is your fortieth number, yet most people *here* have no idea of the existence of anything called the *Lagos Times* (LT, 9 August 1882, 2).

In 1883, a letter from a “Native” also demanded that at least one of three Lagos newspapers should be published in the Yoruba language so that the press could address their messages to the masses:

They [three Lagos newspapers] all address themselves only to the comparatively small number of English reading people on the island... no thought is taken of the large bulk of people to be found in connection with every church on the island and in the interior who can only appreciate a vernacular newspaper... the very large number of Yoruba readers are all neglected and left to suffer from intellectual starvation as if they also are not *in re* [in the matter of] the country and as if their help is not needed for their own advancement and the building up

of the Negro race (22 August 1883, 3)

In response to the growing demand for a vernacular language newspaper, *Iwe Irohin Eko*<sup>65</sup> was launched by Andrew M. Thomas—the former editor of the *Lagos Times and Gold Coast Colony Advertiser*. *Iwe Irohin Eko* was a Yoruba-English bilingual newspaper published on the first and third Saturday of each month, and circulated 192-256 copies fortnightly (5,000-6,650 annually) (see Appendices 6 and 7). It was sold at the price of 2 pence from 1888. This “new venture in the field of Lagos Journalism” was hailed “with joy” because it was considered to be an attempt to save “Yoruba Literature, our Folklore, Legends, Histories, Parables, Aphorisms, Allegories, &c.” from oblivion (LO, 27 October & 3 November 1888, 2); however, it ceased publication four years later in 1892.<sup>66</sup> Despite the fact there were a few indigenous attempts to publish vernacular or bilingual newspapers following *Iwe Irohin Eko*—such as the vernacular newspaper, which was established in 1906 at Ijebu-Ode by J. Odomosu, and the *In Leisure Hours* published by the CMS in Ibadan between 1910 and the 1940s,<sup>67</sup> it was in the 1920s that successive attempts of Yoruba bilingual newspapers effloresced.

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<sup>65</sup> Only the issue published on 9 May 1891 is currently available at the British Library. The length of this issue was four pages.

<sup>66</sup> There was one more English language newspaper launched in the 1880s. The *Mirror*, a weekly paper, which was owned and edited by P. Adolphus Marke between 17 December 1887 and 24 November 1888. It was sold for 3 pence and printed by “the Commercial Printing Press” at Marina when Marke obtained his printing press (*Mirror*, 3 November 1888, 1). Marke had trained as printer in the *Gold Coast Times* and, even after ceasing publication of the *Mirror*, he continued printing enterprise at least in the 1890s (Payne 1893, 40; Omu 1978, 31).

<sup>67</sup> In 1906, a vernacular newspaper was established in Ijebu-Ode by J. Odomosu, a cousin of John Otonba Payne. The editor of the *Lagos Standard* reported with delight that he received a copy of its first issue of the paper “printed at Ijebu Ode in the vernacular” and encouraged them “More power to his elbows!” (LS, 28 November 1906, 3). In Eastern Nigeria, the Presbyterian Church of Scotland missions initiated the newspaper called *Unwana Efik* from 1885 at Calabar, the *Old Calabar Observer* was published in 1902-1904, and the *Aurora* was printed weekly by W. Coulson Labor between 1914 and 1917 (Omu 1978, 254-256).

The political environment and the grant of the franchise in 1922 assisted the proliferation of newspapers in Lagos, and six Yoruba weekly newspapers were subsequently founded in the 1920s: *Eko Akete* by Adeoye Deniga, 1922-29, 1937; *Eletí-Ofe* by E. A. Akintan 1923-28; the *Yoruba News* published in Ibadan by Denrele A. Obasa in 1924; *Iwe Irohin Osose* by T. H. Jackson 1925-27; *Eko Igbehin* by E. M. Awobiyi 1926-27; and *Akede Eko* by I. B. Thomas 1928-53 (Coker 1968, 16; Barber 2005).

By this time, there was a growing interest in Yoruba customs and language in many Lagos newspapers, as will be seen in later sections of this chapter. Nevertheless, it was still doubtful how many educated African elite (mostly *Saro* and *Amaro*) actually had a good understanding of Yoruba history and customs and literacy in the Yoruba language. At this time, studies of the Yoruba had just begun, and only a few people—such as Bishop Samuel Ajayi Crowther, Rev. James Johnson, Rev. E. M. Lijadu, John Otonba Payne, Rev. Mojola Agbebi and Samuel Johnson—seem to have had a good understanding of the local cultural environment.

### **2.3. The *Lagos Weekly Record* and *Lagos Standard***

In the 1890s, two important newspapers emerged, and it was these newspapers which led the next two to four decades of Nigerian press history. One of them was the *Lagos Weekly Record*, launched in January, 1891, by John Payne Jackson (1847-1915), who was a pan-Africanist of Liberian origin. He is considered to be one of the most influential “native foreigners”, together with Edward Wilmot Blyden, who founded the early “modern Nigerian nationalism” (Coleman 1958, 183). The *Lagos Weekly Record* is



the best studied newspaper due to its long existence over forty years—running from 1891-1930—and its race-consciousness and uncompromising anti-imperialistic stand. Initially, each copy was sold for 3 pence, but this rose to 4 pence in 1917 due to increased material- and production-related costs (6 & 13 January 1917, 7), and became 6 pence from 1919 onwards. From the late 1890s, the paper was printed by Jackson's own printing establishment, which was called Samadu Press<sup>68</sup> and was “named after the great Dahomeian warrior who surrendered to the French in 1898” (Gwam 1967, 43). During the 1890s, the *Lagos Weekly Record* received an annual subsidy from the Colonial Government of £150, and had mild political views (27 March 1897, 4; 24 September 1898, 4). However, it soon became nationalistic because of John Payne Jackson's belief that the “native press” was “a needed though feeble instrument for voicing the Native side of matters under the aegis of an absolute system of government” (LWR, 19 March 1910, 5). Even after his son, Thomas Horatio Jackson (1879-1936), took over the proprietorship and editorship of the paper in March 1914, the *Record* maintained his father's ideas and reputations until its final demise in December 1930.<sup>69</sup>

One of the common subjects in the *Record* was the “mimicry” of Western civilisation and the position of the educated elite in society, which will be further

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<sup>68</sup> As shown in footnote 31, the private commercial printing presses emerged from the 1870s and there were at least seven private printing establishments in Lagos at the end of 1880s (Payne 1886, 40). In the 1890s, the offices of the *Lagos Weekly Record* and the *Lagos Standard* offered some printing jobs, and C. C. Cole, a leader of the African Church movement, set up the Karaole Press in 1898. The avenue for indigenous expression was widened, in 1910, with the foundation of the Tika Tore Press by Akintunde Adeshigbin. He formerly worked apprentice-printer at the Samadu Press, was nicknamed as the Nigerian “Caslon” after the eighteenth century British typographer, William Caslon. Adeshigbin enjoyed printing monopoly before the emergence of CMS printing press in Abeokuta in 1913. These private printing offices became the basis for local literature (Coker 1968, 15 & 96; Omu 1978, 23 & 74-75). In 1920, D. A. Obasa inserted advertisements of his Ilare Press in Ibadan in the *Lagos Weekly Record* (21 August 1920, 4).

<sup>69</sup> Thomas H. Jackson published and edited a Yoruba weekly newspaper called *Iwe Irohin Osose* between 1925 and 27 (Omu 1978, 253).

discussed in Chapter 3. Furthermore, the candid expressions of the *Record* attracted the reading public, and it constantly increased its circulation from 278 weekly in the 1890s, to 700 in the 1910s, and then 2,000 copies between 1923 and 1930. The *Record* had the ability to influence the reading section of the society by commenting on contemporary Governors of Lagos and Southern Nigeria and creating certain images (often negative) of them (Gwam 1967, 44). Its most outspoken expressions were seen in comments on Sir Frederick Lugard (1858-1945), who assumed the position of the High Commissioner of the Protectorate Northern Nigeria from 1900 to 1906, Governor of both Colonies of Southern Nigeria and Northern Nigeria from 1912 to 1913, and Governor-General of the Colony of Nigeria between 1914 and 1919:<sup>70</sup>

His Excellency Sir Frederick Dealtry Lugard... is a disappointment to Southern Nigeria... A man whose walking stick is a pistol and whose thought by day and dream by night are punitive expeditions and military patrols. Stirring tales are told of his negrophobism, his anti-black proclivities, and his distant attitude to all men in general... His Excellency was represented as a man who is enemy of all, friend of none, recognizing the white man a little, the black man not at all, and brushing aside the amenities of civilized life and devoting himself wholly and solely to his King and his country; in fact some sort of ogre (LWR, 8 March 1913, 4).

Compared to newspapers of the 1880s, early twentieth century newspapers covered not only Lagos and its proximities, but also wider geographic areas, including inland areas of Nigeria, other British West African countries, Britain, America and

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<sup>70</sup> Sir Frederick developed “Indirect Rule” the renowned system of British colonial administration to rule vast territory with minimal expense. His administration was reported to restrict political and educational opportunities of indigenous people especially in southern and eastern Nigeria. On the retirement of Lugard in 1919, Thomas Jackson commented that “we cannot help but write Sir Frederick down as a Huge Failure. Judged by the light of the modern conscience in its treatment of subject races, Sir Frederick is a hopeless anachronism; so hopeless indeed that as the product of a bygone age” (LWR, 1-22 February 1919, 3-4; Fafunwa 1974, 100-15; Cell 1999, 240-241).

sometimes other parts of Europe and Africa. The firms in the *Record's* advertisements columns illustrated its geographical expansion from the late 1910s onwards. Whilst the majority of the advertisements was composed by companies in Lagos and England, advertisements of the firms in inland Nigeria and other parts of the world also appeared in the paper. Examples include the commercial agency “Laxmichand Dossabhai & Bros” at Rojakot, India (10 March 1917, 8), the notice of “E. O. Idowu” who worked as a “motor transporter, trader, licensed auctioneer” in Kano, “D. A. Obasa’s Ilare Press at Ognpa Road” in Ibadan and the “Kola Trading Agency” in Accra (21 August 1920, 4). The *Record* began to widen its commercial representation to inland Nigeria, such as Ibadan, Oshogbo and Kano, as well as to Accra, especially after Thomas H. Jackson took over the business from his father in 1914 and began the new version of the paper in June 1919.<sup>71</sup>

The expansion of commercial agencies was also due to the development of railway communications towards inland Nigeria and, as from the second half of the 1890s, the Colonial Government undertook projects to improve the transportation in Nigeria in order to facilitate the export of commodities. In 1898, the railway from Lagos to Otta was established, and this line reached Ibadan in 1901, Oshogbo in 1907, and Jebba in 1909. From 1907, the construction of the railway line connecting Baro in Niger and the northern areas, like Zungeru, Zaria, and Kano, began. This line connected with the Lagos line in 1912, which accordingly enabled the transportation of commodities

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<sup>71</sup> List of Agents of the *Lagos Weekly Record* in 1919

Accra: Mr. T. Laing

Winnebuh: Mr. G. E. Eminsang. B.L.

Ibadan: Mr. D. A. Obassa, Iddo gate.

Kano: Mr. O. T. George, Sabon-Gari. & Mr. A. Victor Johnson.

Lagos: Mr. C. W. George, Marins; Tika-Tore Printing Office, Broad Street; Sogunro Store, Akinsemoyin Street; Remington Store, Tinubu Square; Mr. Ibaru, 89 Ibale-Agbede; Olujare Medicaïne Store, Borad Street; Mohammed Ali, 95 Offin Marins.

Oshogbo: Mr. Chas. B. Randall.

from northern areas directly to Lagos. In Eastern Nigeria, the railway between Port Harcourt and Enugu was established by 1916 (Ekundare 1973, 74-75 & 134-142), which subsequently enabled newspapers to spread to the whole of Nigeria, and also enabled the editors to collect news from correspondents in the remote areas.<sup>72</sup>

Thomas H. Jackson's intention to increase the circulation of his newspaper can also be seen in the "Great Sales Campaign", which was launched in 1919 in order to "reach the 10,000 weekly circulation". The boys and girls who contributed to selling the paper would be provided with various benefits, including "scholarships in King's College and in any of the Secondary or Primary schools".<sup>73</sup> There were also "prizes, such as fountain pens, watches, cycles, etc. for those securing yearly, half-yearly or quarterly subscriptions payable in advance". Furthermore, the *Record* offered their commercial agents 5 percent for weekly sales of ten copies, 10 percent for weekly sales of 40 copies, and 12½ percent for sales above 40 (7 June 1919, 7). Similar circulation campaigns were carried out in 1921, 1922 and 1923 (Omu 1978, 84), and Thomas H. Jackson even established a London edition of the paper called the *African Sentinel* in 1920 in order to "interpret to the great British nation", who had been misinformed and ignorant about West Africa, "the thoughts that beat under the breast of her dusky sons of Negroland" (14 February 1920, 5).

The reorganisation of the *Record* in June 1919, improved its typography,<sup>74</sup> and

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<sup>72</sup> Distribution of newspapers by post was more common than by railway or by roads. It was in 1949 that the *Nigerian Daily Times* first launched the delivery of newspapers by transport lorries (Omu 1978, 79 & 96). The details on the development of road transportation in Nigeria, see Ekundare (1973, 142-147).

<sup>73</sup> The *Record* prepared three kinds of scholarships in the 1919 "Great Sales Campaign": (1). Free tuition in any primary schools to those who contribute to the sales of 10 Copies weekly or 400 to 500 per annum (2). Free tuition in any primary schools to those who contribute to the sales of 25 Copies weekly or 1000 to 1500 per annum (3). Free tuition in any primary schools to those who contribute to the sales of 50 Copies weekly or 2,000 to 2,500 per annum (LWR, 7 June 1919, 7).

<sup>74</sup> The contents of the *Record* between 1917 and 1919 significantly differed from those of other

the paper came to include columns written by various people. The paper had been reorganised, and subsequently began with assistant editorships by F. C. Stuart-Campbell and Ernest S. Ikoli. The column titled, “Educational Notes” by “OKOLOBIA” started in 1919 (19 July 1919, 5), and columns about events in Central and Northern Nigeria began in 1920. Both “Kano Day by Day” by “Sai Wata Rana” and “Lokoja News” by “TITANIC” contained around 10 short pieces of news in each (21 August 1920, 3); however, the events written about in these columns were almost solely concerned with Europeans and educated Africans (mostly Yourba) who were part of British Colonial Government administration in these areas, such as “Captain Uniache Inspector-General of Police... paid a visit of inspection to Lokoja” (21 February 1920, 5) and “The Acting Commissioner of Police Mr. L. W. La Chard, has [left Kano and] gone to Lokoja” (29 May 1920, 4).

The *Record* began to widen its attention to inland Nigeria, whilst simultaneously maintaining its interest in the pan-West African view, especially after Thomas H. Jackson returned from a seven-month visit to England in January 1919. The following leading article entitled “West Africa on the Move” especially illustrates his pan-African views:

British West Africa which includes the four colonies of the Gambia, Sierra Leone, Gold Coast and Nigeria is a land which embraces an area of about 452,000 square miles, and is peopled by about 25 million inhabitants, mostly negroes, of all grades of civilisation... Separated as they are by tremendous distances and great as may be the diversity in the outstanding characteristics of the various tribal units,

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periods. The paper was published less frequently like fortnightly or monthly. Between 1917 and 1919, less news and more short stories written occupied the space, such as “In A French Chateau” by M. Batman Edwards, “Over The Top” by Patrick MacGill, “The Stupid Miss Preston” by John Ayscough (19 May 1917, 2-4; 30 June 1917, 3-4). This might be because of Thomas’s seven months’ visit to England from “29 May 1918- 17 January 1919 (Omu 1978, 53).

yet the people of West Africa have discovered today what the Indian had discovered 35 years ago, that, placed as they were under the controlling influence of a foreign power, it was essential to their well-being that they should make a common cause and develop a national unity... we hope the day will soon come when Mandingoes, Foulahs, Mendis, and Creoles, Fanti and Ga, the Hausas, Yoruba and Ibos will make a common stand and work hand in hand for their common fatherland (10 April 1920, 9).

Moreover, both John Payne Jackson and his son, Thomas, had wide knowledge of and interest in areas outside of Lagos, which undoubtedly contributed to their paper's continuing citation of articles from London and other British West African newspapers, such as *The Times* in London, the *Sierra Leone Weekly News*, and the *Gold Coast Leader*<sup>75</sup> throughout its publication. The *Lagos Weekly Record* even occasionally sent messages to such newspapers through their own columns (21 February 1920, 5).

The significance of the *Record* is not only its longevity and its sustained and increasing nationalism, but also its role as a printing workshop. From the establishment period, Lagos press offices educated future journalists. Andrew Thomas and R. B. Blaize of the *Lagos Times* trained printers, and the *Lagos Observer* and the *Eagle and Lagos Critic* both had two apprentices for the printing establishment of their paper (LO, 29 March 1883; E&LC, April 1888). The Government Printing Department, the CMS press in Lagos and Rev. Hope Waddell in the Calabar Presbyterian Mission also provided printing training courses for apprentices. Furthermore, others received training in Accra, Cape Coast and Freetown, like James Bright Davies of the *Nigeria Times* who received training as a printer and journalist from the staffs of the *Gold Coast Independent*,<sup>76</sup> before he launched his own newspaper in Lagos (Coker 1968, 12-14;

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<sup>75</sup> The *Gold Coast Leader* was established by J. E. Casely Hayford (1833-1930) and published at Cape Coast (now the capital of Central region of Ghana) between 1902 and 1929.

<sup>76</sup> The *Gold Coast Independent* was published between 1895 and 1898, then 1918 and 1956.

Omu 1978, 41 & 74; Duliye 1987, 69-82). Amongst these print training workshops, Jackson's Samadu Press exceeded others in the number of future printers and journalists they had educated, including Prince Ladapo Ademola (later Oba Ladapo Ademola, Alake of Abeokuta between 1920 and 1962), Akintunde Adeshigbin, Adeoye Deniga, I. B. Thomas and Ernest S. Ikoli. Akintunde Adeshigbin established the Tika-Tore Printing Press in 1910, Adeoye Deniga published *Eko Akete* between 1922 and 1929, and also in 1937, and I. B. Thomas published *Akede Eko* from 1928-1953 as well as the *Nigerian Evening News* in 1929. Furthermore, Ernest S. Ikoli published the *African Messenger* between 1921 and 1928, whilst also working as an editor of the *Nigerian Daily Times*, from 1926-1929; the *Nigerian Daily Telegraph*, between 1928 and 1931; and the *Daily Service*, from 1938 to 1943 (Coker 1968, 32-34; Omu 1978, 61-64 & 253-54).

The another important newspaper which started in the 1890s<sup>77</sup> was the *Lagos Standard*, launched by G. A. Williams (1851-1919), a former businessman of Egba origin. He was educated at the Sierra Leone Grammar School and came to Lagos to work under J. S. Leigh, "one of the native prince-merchants of those days" (LWR, 14 June 1919, 7). The *Lagos Standard* was published at its own printing house, the Machine Printing Works, on Broad Street, Lagos, and was no less popular than the *Record*. It circulated between 300 and 1,050 copies weekly during its publication between 1895 and 1920, which sometimes exceeded the *Record* (see Appendices 6 and 7). Although the *Standard* had agencies only in Lagos and in London,<sup>78</sup> we can assume

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<sup>77</sup> Apart from the *Lagos Weekly Record* and the *Lagos Standard*, there were five other newspapers launched in the 1890s: The *Lagos Weekly Times* (1890) edited by John Payne Jackson and owned by R. B. Blaize, the *Spectator* which is said to be published from 1893 but whose editor is unknown, the *Lagos Echo*, a weekly newspaper edited by S. M. Harden and owned by Lagos Printing and Publishing Company Limited between 1894 and 1897, the *Lagos Weekly Reporter* by P. Mason in 1898-99 and the *Wasp* which was said to be launched in 1900 by Sydney Grave (LWR, 8 September 1894; Coker 1968; Omu 1978).

<sup>78</sup> Commercial agencies of the *Lagos Standard* are as follow: Mrs. Walton Lumpking's Drapery

the editor's intention to circulate his paper worldwide by the annual subscription that had been kept at the same price in "any part of world" throughout the twenty four years of its publication. The paper began as a four-page newspaper, but increased its length to eight pages and enlarged to double demy size<sup>79</sup> in 1904, though it decreased to six pages due to the lack of paper during the First World War (LS, 21 September 1904, 2). The *Standard* was firstly sold at the price of 3 pence and raised to 6 pence according to the rise in the price of paper during World War I. After the death of his father in May 1919, E. V. Williams took over the editorship and continued the paper with the management of J. T. A. White, but their project collapsed in January 1920.

Although the *Standard* adhered to their initial pro-British motto, "For God, the King (Queen) and the People" which meant "faith in God, loyalty to the King, and fidelity to the People", it increasingly expressed nationalist views (LS, 15 September 1909, 4-5). George Williams was involved in protest movements in Lagos as an executive member of the Lagos Auxiliary of Anti-Slavery and Aborigines' Protection Society, President of the Native Literature Publishing Society,<sup>80</sup> and founding member of the United Native African Church. He was fined twice for libel for an attack against missionaries and the land question deputation (LWR, 14 June 1919, 7; Webster 1964, 137). The paper was initially patronised by Frank Rohrerger, an official of the Lagos Colonial Government, and Kitoyi Ajasa, a Nigerian lawyer with conservative views; however, Williams' political anti-governmental stand led them to withdraw their

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Store in Lagos and D. J. Keymer & Co. at Whitefriar Street in London (LS, 24 August 1910; 19 October 1910).

<sup>79</sup> 1 demy is 44 × 57 cm (16 × 21 inch).

<sup>80</sup> Williams' interest in the rehabilitation of Yoruba literature led him to establish the Native Literature Publishing Society with leading educated elite such as J. A. Otonba Payne, A. O. Taiwo, Rev. T. A. J. Ogunbiyi and E. M. Lidaju in 1905. It was the reorganised form of the Native Poems Publishing Committee, which was founded in 1904 (LS, 27 January 1904, 2), and intended to relieve financial anxiety of the authors of "Native" books and literature (28 June 1905, 7).



backing. He stated the reason for his nationalist stand as follows:

No Government is above criticism, and especially is this so in West Africa, where all the power is virtually [in] the hands of one man, and where the people have practically no voice in the management of affairs. Under such conditions the Press is the only medium through which the people can advocate their rights and claim redress for their grievances (LS, 17 September 1902, 3).

The *Standard* was significantly self-conscious of the newspaper's responsibilities to society, and inserted the anniversary editorial every September, which stated the editor's opinions on the newspaper and on journalism. In 1902, the editor acknowledged the "native" press's role as representation of the people in Lagos:

If the need for a native Press was great a few years back, that need has become greater today when West Africa has sprung into unusual prominence with the civilised world, and several European papers, devoted exclusively to West African interests, have been called into being, live and flourish. The need then for a sound, able and powerful native Press, to voice the sentiments of the people, and make their wants and wishes known, will be obvious to the least intelligent; for foreign papers, however well-disposed, and inclined to be just and impartial towards the Native... cannot understand and enter into the feelings and aspirations of a people alien in race, colour, habits of life, in almost every conceivable thing except that spirit of loyalty which unites the Empire (17 September 1902, 3).

Compared with the *Record*, the *Standard* quoted fewer news items from abroad and focused more keenly on domestic issues. Its advertisements consisted mostly of indigenous firms. On 11 March 1899, out of 35 advertisements and notices, the *Record* carried 20 advertisements of British firms (including those with branches in Lagos or other parts of West Africa), 10 of Lagos firms, and 5 notices from the Colonial

Government or individuals in Lagos. On 15 January 1910, of 38 advertisements and notices, 18 were of British firms, 13 were those of Lagos firms, 4 were from other parts of Europe, and 3 were notices from the Colonial Government or individuals in Lagos. On 10 March 1917, of 25 advertisements, 18 were British firms, 4 were those of Lagos, 2 were those of India. On the other hand, the *Standard* on 15 March 1899 contained 28 advertisements and notices, 20 of which were advertisements relating to firms in Lagos, 5 were those of British firms. On 12 January 1910, 24 of 42 advertisements were those of Lagos businesses, 11 were of British firms, 5 were from other parts of Europe, and 2 were notices of the *Standard* office itself; and on 14 March 1917, 12 out of 33 advertisements and notices were those of Lagos businesses, 13 were of British firms, 5 were notices from the Colonial Government or individuals in Lagos, and 2 were medicine advertisements of firms in Paris (Table 1).

**Table 1: Contents of Advertisements in the *Lagos Weekly Record* and the *Lagos Standard***

	<b>LWR</b> 11/3/1899 • 5/1/1910 • 10/3/1917			<b>LS</b> 15/3/1899 • 12/1/1910 • 14/3/1917		
British Firms	20	18	8	5	11	13
Lagos Firms	10	13	4	20	24	12
Others	–	4	2	3	6	2
Colonial Government or Individuals	5	3	–	–	–	5
Anonymous	–	–	1	–	1	1
Total	35	38	25	28	42	33

When Thomas H. Jackson became the proprietor of the *Record*, contributions were accepted from several columnists, whilst the *Standard* had been written by various contributors since its early periods. The column called “Lagosian on Bits” by “JANUS” began in 1896, when Samuel Harden reported, in one or two sentences, on 8-12 local news stories inside Lagos, making it “a distinctive feature of this paper” (23 September 1896, 3).<sup>81</sup> There was the occasional column by “A Banker” on news in Britain and Europe between the years 1900 and 1902, and the epistolary column by a Muslim gentleman, “Babuji”, appeared between 1913 and 1914.<sup>82</sup> This column by “Babuji” was of interest to “Muslims of Nigeria”, who constituted the largest portion of the population (10 September 1913, 6). It published serialised letters on “The Mohammedan Festival Day in Lagos” between 17 September and 22 October 1913 and “Dress for Nigerian Ladies” in 1914 (4 March 1914, 4-5).

The *Standard* was also noted for its use of photographs from 1895 in the column “Portrait Gallery”, for the purpose of reviewing worthy individuals who had “been most prominent in the development of the resources of the country, and in the true advancement and material progress of its inhabitants” (18 September 1895, 2). Rev. Mojola Agbebi appeared in the first “Our Picture Gallery” on 14 November 1895 and the photograph of Miss Sabina Patience Oyinkan on her wedding with Dr. Alfred Leigh

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<sup>81</sup> Omu (1978) suggests “Janus” is the pseudonym of Samuel Harden (176). This would be Samuel M. Harden, who was a son of Rev. J. M. Harden, an African-American Baptist missionary, landed in Liberia in 1853 and founded American Baptist Church in Lagos the following year. From 1879, Samuel had studies in Virginia Union University in Richmond, Virginia, USA, where the headquarters of Southern Baptist Convention were located. He came back to Lagos to serve the Native Baptist Church, at the same time, working as the editor of the *Lagos Echo*, a weekly newspaper owned by Lagos Printing and Publishing Company Limited, between 1894 and 1897 (Webster 1964, 50-58; Omu 1978).

<sup>82</sup> This is one of the rare examples of an educated Muslim contributing to early Lagos newspapers. The first newspaper to be published by a Muslim in Nigeria appeared in 1939. *Gaskiya Ta Fi Kwabo* was a governmentally owned Hausa language newspaper edited from a Muslim point of view. For details see Coker (1968, 47).

Sodiye was printed on 17 February 1897.

G. A. Williams' interest in the rehabilitation of Yoruba literature led him to establish the Native Literature Publishing Society with the leading educated elite, such as J. A. Otonba Payne, A. O. Taiwo, Rev. T. A. J. Ogunbiyi and E. M. Lidaju in 1905. The society supported the publication of a volume of "Ode's poem" by Rev. E. M. Lidaju, and held a "Dramatic Recital" on 8 February 1906 (7 February 1906, 3; 14 February 1906, 3). Williams inserted advertisements for books and pamphlets written in both Yoruba and English, and sold them at his office.<sup>83</sup> From the *Standard*, we can see that the printing offices of Lagos newspapers worked as the distributing centre of both books and pamphlets written both in English and Yoruba.

In addition to the literature, the *Standard* reflected Williams' interest in Yoruba history. In the early years of the twentieth century, for instance, Lagos newspapers published a number of works on Yoruba history. In 1900-01, the *Standard* published two fragmentary notes on nineteenth century history of Lagos and the hinterland by an author of unknown identity who used the pseudonym "Supra". More substantial work appeared between 1905 and 1906; that is, serialised articles entitled "A General History of the Yoruba Country", published under the pseudonym "A Yoruba Historian". This column was written by Rev. Michael Thomas Euler Ajayi (1846-1913),<sup>84</sup> and covered wider subjects—not only the topics on history but also on the education and social conditions of people in Yorubaland, slavery, food, drink, Yoruba money, the Yoruba calendar, a list of literature published in Lagos by "Native Authors",<sup>85</sup> buildings,

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<sup>83</sup> See for instance, LS 1 February 1899, 2; 10 June 1914, 7.

<sup>84</sup> Rev. Michael Thomas Euler Ajayi (1846-1913) was a Sierra Leonean of Yoruba origin and a clergyman of the separatist United Native African Church (Law 1976, 80).

<sup>85</sup> The following are the names of 17 leading "Native authors" from 1870 to 1906 which were listed in the column: Rev. James Johnson, John Augustus Otonba Payne, Henry Carr, Dr. Mojola Agbebi, Rev. Professor Ebenezer Ephraim Collins-Tella Adebisi, John O. George, James W.

industries, tribal marks, dress, Yoruba Gods, superstitions, effects of Western civilisation and the imprudence of “Europeanised native”.<sup>86</sup> As will be discussed later, this attitude to Yoruba history and customs continued in the *Nigerian Chronicle*.

## **2.4. Government Regulations and the Press in Lagos**

Between 1908 and 1914, four more newspapers were founded: the *Nigerian Chronicle* (1908-1915), the *Nigerian Pioneer* (1914-1936), the *Nigerian Times* (1910-1911) and the *Times of Nigeria* (1917-1924).<sup>87</sup> While the editor of the latter two, James Bright Davies, was an important figure associated with newspaper regulations in Lagos, the former two newspapers were more unique in character. Before going into detail, in Section 4, on the *Nigerian Chronicle*, a culture-oriented newspaper, and, in Section 5, on the *Nigerian Pioneer*, which had a significantly pro-British attitude, it would be useful to note the British Government’s reactions to the expansion of the Lagos press from the 1890s.

With the emergence of indigenous newspapers in Lagos in the 1860s, a number of British governors were eager to control the expression of protest in the press (Omu 1978, 172-74; Clarke 1986, 60). The press was, at that time, the only democratic outlet for Nigerian indigenes wishing to criticise the activities of the Colonial Government and to,

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Vaughan, Rev. Emanuel M. Lijadu, Daniel John Sorinolu, Rev. Michael Thomas Euler Ajayi, J. G. Kuye, Rev. Emanuel A. Kayode, T. A. J. Ogunbiyi, Stephen Albert Allen, A. L. Hethersett, N. Onatolu and Mrs, A. Oluwole. It was also noted that Bishop Crowther was excluded from this list as his name had been already “immortalized” by his great works (28 February 1906, 6).

<sup>86</sup> This column was serialised almost every week between 7 June 1905 and 7 March 1906.

<sup>87</sup> The *Nigerian Times* (1910-1911) and the *Times of Nigeria* (1914-1924) were both edited and owned by James Bright Davies (1848-1920) in Lagos (Omu 1978, 40-43). This research does not cover extensively on these two newspapers due to the fact that the former paper only lasted for a year and half and that the latter was published very irregularly. The *Times of Nigeria* started as a weekly newspaper, but it was only for the first six months that it was actually published weekly.

accordingly, mobilise the citizenry. As the *Record* became increasingly nationalistic, the Colonial Government became more concerned about the political agitations of the press, and eventually, in 1903, the Newspaper Ordinance was promulgated. This act required the registration of all newspapers, with a bond of £250 and two sureties. The press were also required to deliver signed copies of their paper to the Government. The penalty for defaulting was a £25 fine, for publishing newspapers without affidavits or bondsmen. Soon after the Newspapers Ordinance was proposed in the Lagos Legislative Council in April 1902, a petition against the ordinance, with the signatures of 300 people, was sent to Governor MacGregor. The petition requested careful amendment of the bill, arguing that there were very few libel cases in Nigeria, and that the press was “the principal instrument by means of which” people in Lagos were “enabled to publicly express their opinions and grievances”(LWR, 13 June 1903, 5). Nevertheless, the bill was passed, and this Ordinance of 1903 became the basis of the Newspaper Ordinance of 1917, which subsequently increased the fine to £50. Up until the 1930s, there were no prosecutions under this Ordinance; however, it had the effect of preventing a proliferation of the press (Omu 1978, 177-182).

More controversial laws were those concerned with criminal libels and seditious. The outburst of press criticism—specifically protest related to the water rate tax and land acquisition for public use—motivated the Colonial Government to pass the Seditious Offences Ordinance in 1909, which was later developed and consolidated in the Criminal Code of 1916. The 1909 Ordinance exercised control over any kind of publication or communication that could bring, or attempt to bring, feelings of hatred or contempt towards the Government in Southern Nigeria. In the 1909 Ordinance, the penalty for defaulting was two years’ imprisonment, with the option of a fine. A mass

meeting was held to protest the bill, attended by 6,000 inhabitants of Lagos, when senior white-cap chief Ojora made a speech and declared that “such a law as the Seditious Offences Ordinance would open the floodgates of intrigue by evil-disposed persons to degrade and demoralise the country” (LWR, 7 May 1910, 5). The 1916 Criminal Ordinance extended the law-enforced area to any British colonies outside Nigeria, and also increased the “punishment from two to three years for a first offender, and to seven years for an offender with a previous conviction”. The *Record* criticised this ordinance, intended to “muzzle up” the local press, as “unnecessary and redundant” (21 April 1917, 2). The *Standard*, in the column called “Jottings” by “Dogmatist”, urged that it was absolutely unnecessary “to appoint a Censor of Newspapers for the public safety”; at least in the “present generation” in Nigeria (17 October 1917, 5). James Bright Davies of the *Times of Nigeria* was the first victim of the sedition law. In February 1916, Davies was accused of attempting to foment enmity against the Lagos Government and fined £100.<sup>88</sup> The following year, he was again accused of seditious publication against the Government and was this time sentenced to imprisonment for six months. These measures could superficially suppress the political expression of the press, but the basis of press nationalism seems to have already been founded, and press agitation consequently continued in a way that would not violate the law (Coker 1968, 50-55; Omu 1978, 171-203).<sup>89</sup>

As already discussed, the opposition of the Lagos press to the Newspaper Ordinances reinforces its mission as that of “representative” of the people, as well as

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<sup>88</sup> Davies published articles that criticised the negro-phobia of the Governor in Sierra Leone (Omu 1978, 190).

<sup>89</sup> G. A. Williams of the *Lagos Standard* and J. B. Benjamin (former publisher of the *Lagos Observer*) was accused of suggesting the relation between the mysterious death of Otonba Payne and Sapara Williams in the *Lagos Standard* of 1913. They were fined £300 for damages in this libel suit (Omu 1978, 170 n95).

that of being a popular educator. We can also assume the educated elite's attitude toward the Colonial Government at the time. They expected the Colonial Government to be a guardian of the material development of the colony, not the controller of free speech or the collector of tax, as will be shown in the following chapters.

## 2.5. The Arrival of "Nigerian" Newspapers

Flora Shaw (1852-1929),<sup>90</sup> a British female journalist (later Lady Lugard), was given credit for proposing the name "Nigeria" in 1897. In an essay, which first appeared in *The Times* on 8 January 1897, she suggested the name "Nigeria" for the British Protectorate on the Niger River that was controlled under the title of "Royal Niger Company Territories" (*The Times*, 8 January 1897). Although Flora Shaw intended the name to cover the territory now known as Northern Nigeria, the British Colonists eventually adopted it for the whole country.

Whilst the construction of "Yorubanness" can be traced back to the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, it is argued that consciousness of a united Nigeria did not emerge until the 1930s (Peel 2000, 280 & 382n4; Falola and Heaton 2008, 137). We can, however, see the germination of consciousness regarding "Nigeria" in the early twentieth century Lagos newspapers. The press played a significant role in the gradual diffusion and popularisation of the term "Nigeria". As early as 1900, "Nigeria" was used not only as the political boundary of the British Government but also as a

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<sup>90</sup> Dame Flora Louisa Shaw (1852-1929) was born in London and began her career as journalist in 1886 first for the *Pall Mall Gazette* and then also for the *Manchester Guardian* in 1888. From 1893, she served as colonial editor of *The Times*. She married Sir Frederick Lugard in 1902, at the age of 49. She returned England because of her illness, however, continued to support of her husband "through her political and social networks and by praising his administration in Northern Nigeria in her book *A Tropical Dependency* (1905)" (*The Times*, 29 September 1960; Helly and Callay 2004).



geographical framework, if not as a country. In the letter from pseudonym “VICTIM”, it was suggested that the salary of African civil servants in “Governments of Nigeria” was unsatisfactory as their incomes did not cover expanded living costs “in Nigeria” (LWR, 8 December 1900, 5-6). Moreover, the poem entitled “United Nigeria” appeared in 1914 (LS, 14 January 1914, 4). The examinations in the following chapters will show that the educated elite made use of a political framework of Nigeria, which was initially made by the British Government, in order to establish a sense of unity and to ease social cleavages in Lagos.

The *Nigerian Chronicle* was the first newspaper to make use of the word “Nigeria” in its title. It was founded by two brothers—Christopher Josephus Johnson, who had studied economics at the University of Liverpool, and Emmanuel T. Johnson, a graduate of London University and a Methodist minister who, at the same time, served as principal of the New High Class School on Shitta Street, Lagos. At their office called Kumola House on Shitta Street in Lagos, 400-600 copies were published every Friday between 20 November 1908 and 26 March 1915, with each copy being sold for 3 pence.

As the third weekly paper in Lagos, it was intended to take a scholarly approach to journalism and to broadcast not only the news relating to politics, commerce and religion, but also to focus on topics relating to “Sports, the Home, Native customs and Institutions, languages and terms, proverbs and parables” (NC, 20 November 1908, 4). The *Chronicle* has not received enough attention from previous studies, apart from the fact that this was the first newspaper with “Nigeria” on its title. It has an interestingly experimental character in its format and its contents. The *Chronicle* differed from other newspapers in its format as it had a table of contents on the second page of the paper. There is no mention of lists of sales agencies in the paper, aside from their printing

office, called Kumola House, which probably meant the paper's target audience comprised people inside Lagos. Regarding its contents, rather than merely reporting the wide range of news of the previous week in Lagos and overseas, the *Chronicle* tended to devote space to certain issues—such as analysis of current affairs, criticism toward the Colonial Government and cultural issues such as Yoruba history, religion and customs—which took the editor's interest, and serialised their analyses and discussions for consecutive months, often with the assistance of readers' letters. For instance, the discussions on the proper translation of the Lord's Prayer into Yoruba language were serialised in several issues in 1909.<sup>91</sup> A column titled "Sociology" written by one of the editors, Rev. E. T. Johnson, under the pseudonym "Adesola", examined the burial customs called "Iyaku" in Yoruba country between December 1908 and November 1909, and Yoruba antiquity, mythology and religion (Ifa) in 1911. Oguntola Sapara's series of articles were published between March and May 1914, under the title of "Owo Asq Iyawo" (Money given from bridegroom to bride's family for bridal dresses), discussing whether or not this custom was considered a "deplorable system".

The Lagos newspapers reflected the educated elite's idea of their mission to the illiterate section of the society, such as the rehabilitation of traditional customs, religions and ethnic identities. Of the early Lagos press, the *Chronicle* was especially conscious of its role as the recorder of history and as the repository of cultural facts, so much so that the editor frequently inserted book reviews, play critiques, serialised columns on Yoruba history, custom, language and explanations of Yoruba names and terms. The Essay Competition was held by the *Chronicle* with the patronage of Casely Hayford in

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<sup>91</sup> The article under the title of "Yoruba language" discussed the merits of "Jeki a bowo fun oruko re, Ki ijoba re de" and "Owo li oruko re, Ijoba re de" as adequate translations of the phrase "Hallowed be thy Name. Thy kingdom come" in the Lord's Prayer into Yoruba language, and concludes that the former is "good Yoruba" and a more correct rendering of Christ's thought (30 April 1909, 6-7).

1914, in which the essay by John Olakunle Roberts (aged 16) on “Native Hero” Sango and “Roman Hero” Hercules won the prize (27 February 1914, 4-5).

The articles concerning Japan are a prime example of the *Chronicle*’s culture-oriented style. Since the rise of cultural nationalism in the 1880s, the educated elite in Lagos had been searching for modernisation which was deemed suitable for Africans; that is, “real national progress” without losing respect and dignity for their own culture (LWR, 15 May 1920, 5). A series of debates had appeared in the papers concerning how Lagos society should develop after the advent of press in Lagos. Japan’s victory in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905 served as one of the essential sources of inspiration for this debate, and accordingly became a catalyst for the early African nationalist movement (Omu 1978, 51-52 & 149; Davidson 1992, 42). The Russo-Japanese War was a major conflict of the earliest decade of the twentieth century, which was fought for mastery in northeast Asia, specifically for the control of Korea, between February 1904 and September 1905. The defeat of Russia—a traditional European power—by Japan—a non-white and non-Western nation—had been met with shock over the fact that an Asian country employing modern technology could defeat a European power. Colonial subjects across the world, including Africa, were thrilled by the war. As Kowner (2006) suggests, “the main impact of the war on the colonial world was psychological rather than territorial” (18). This victory was perceived as a massive encouragement to the non-Western nations, and even as the first step to the eradication of Western domination. Japan’s prestige accordingly rose greatly, and she became a model for imitation and admiration amongst people under colonial rule, for having succeeded in adopting modern technology without losing her national identity and traditional customs (18-19).

The contemporary Lagos newspapers—especially Thomas H. Jackson of the *Lagos Weekly Record*—also wrote several pro-Japan articles, citing extracts from the British newspapers and journals (Omu 1978, 51-52): Japan was represented as a commendable form of non-Western civilisation, for which Lagos’ educated elite had been searching. Whilst the *Lagos Weekly Record* focused on the military success of Japan, broadcasting her significance at the Russian-Japanese War in 1904-1905, the *Nigerian Chronicle* reported on several occasions on her customs, such as Japanese wrestling, Sumou—of which the editor pointed out its similarity to Yoruba Ijakadi or Gidigbe (7 October 1910, 5-8; 14 October 1910, 6)—and the New Year’s Eve ceremony in old-time Japan—*Setsubun*, a bean-scattering ceremony to cleanse away all evil from the former year, and drive away disease for the year to come—of which the editor discussed its connection to the Yoruba “ceremony of purification held on the Feast of Edi” (26 December 1913, 1-2).<sup>92</sup>

Regarding the revenue of the newspaper, it seems that the editor did not rely on the return from advertisements but on subscriptions. The number of advertisements in the *Chronicle* was much less than that of its contemporaries:<sup>93</sup> on 9 January 1914, the editor prepared four out of twelve pages for advertisement, but there were some blank spaces, and four out of thirteen were advertisements with no income return. For instance, there was the notice on E. T. Johnson’s New High-Class School in Lagos, and the books and pamphlets sold at the Kumola Bookshop of the *Chronicle*, such as “Truth about the West African Land Question” (4 shillings 6 pence) by Casely Hayford, and other books

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<sup>92</sup> The people of Japan have been performing rituals with the purpose of chasing away evil spirits at the start of spring. Roasted soybeans are thrown either out the door or at a member of the family wearing an Oni (ogre) mask, while the throwers chant “Oni wa soto! Fuku wa uchi” The words roughly translate to “Demons out! Luck in!” The beans are thought to symbolically purify the home by driving away the evil spirits that bring misfortune and bad health with them.

<sup>93</sup> The advertising rates were not announced in the paper and it was noticed personally on applications.

on theosophy, occultism, religion and astrology. Omu (1978) suggests the *Chronicle's* unpopularity was owing to its scholarly approach (39-40); however, the statistics show it published 400-600 copies between 1908 and 1912, which is only a little less than those of the *Lagos Standard* and the *Lagos Weekly Record* (see Table 2).

**Table 2: Weekly Circulations of Three Newspapers between 1908 and 1912**

	<i>Lagos Weekly Record</i>	<i>Lagos Standard</i>	<i>Nigerian Chronicle</i>
<b>1908</b>	500	1000	400
<b>1909</b>	500	500	450
<b>1910</b>	500	500	450
<b>1911</b>	700	580	580
<b>1912</b>	700	700	600

(*Blue Book of Southern Nigeria* 1908-1912)

## **2.6. The End of Friendly Co-habitation: Growing Rivalries in the Lagos Press**

The differences of political attitudes amongst newspapers became more obvious during the early twentieth century. The arrival of the *Nigerian Pioneer* in 1914 changed the friendly co-habitation of the Lagos press, which had continued from the nineteenth century, and aggressive criticism began to appear in its place. The *Nigerian Pioneer*, launched by Kitoyi Ajasa (1866-1937), was the most denounced newspaper in the early twentieth century because of its conservative journalism and consistent support of the Government. It was initially sold for 4 pence, with the price later being raised to 6 pence and circulating 500 issues weekly (26,000 annually) until it finally ceased publication in 1936. The *Pioneer* was printed at the CMS Bookshop press on Broad Street, Lagos, for the first six years, and then at the Awoboh Press of Samuel Pease, until Kitoyi Ajasa

purchased his own printing press in the 1930s (Omu 1978, 50).<sup>94</sup>

Kitoyi Ajasa was born in Lagos in 1886 as the son of T. B. Macaulay, a wealthy merchant (no relation to Herbert Macaulay's father). Following a brief career at the CMS Grammar School in Lagos 1878-1880, he was, on account of his poor health, sent to England to complete his secondary education, and subsequently lived there for 14 years, where he qualified for law at the Inner Temple. After he returned to Lagos in 1894, he began a lucrative private practice as a counsel to European merchants; he also worked as a non-official member of the Legislative Council from 1906, and of Governor Lugard's Nigerian Council from 1914-1933, and accordingly built affinitive relationships with European society. Their friendly relationship was seen in the advertisements of his paper, which was occupied mostly by European firms. He was one of the prominent "native foreigners" and "Black Englishmen" of the time, and was knighted in 1928 (July 1967, 429-432; Macmillan [1920] 1968, 128; Omu 1978, 43-50).<sup>95</sup>

Until the establishment of the *Pioneer* in 1914, the Government had almost no protection from press attacks, aside from that of the Seditious Ordinance. However, there is no evidence of Ajasa receiving any subsidy from the Government, although it is said that Sir Walter Egerton and Sir Frederick Lugard encouraged Ajasa to found a paper which represented the voice of "both whites and blacks" (Macmillan [1920] 1968, 128). In the first issue of the *Pioneer*, Ajasa announced that the objective of his

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<sup>94</sup> All of Lagos newspapers which this chapter discusses in detail—the *Anglo-African*, the *Lagos Times and Gold Coast Colony Advertiser*, the *Lagos Observer*, the *Eagle and Lagos Critic*, the *Lagos Weekly Record*, the *Lagos Standard* and the *Nigerian Chronicle*—had their own printing press apart from the *Nigerian Pioneer* at their beginning.

<sup>95</sup> Kitoyi Ajasa was also the father of Mrs. Oyinkan Abayomi (1897-?), one of Nigeria's most important female grassroots activists because of her dedication to social work as a president of the Girl's Guide of Nigeria, the Young Women's Christian Association of Nigeria, and the Women's Party in 1946 (Falola and Genova 2009, 3).

newspaper was “to educate the public opinion of the country, to enable the general community to form a right conception of their obligations as citizens and subjects of a great empire” (18 January 1914, quoted in LWR, 31 January 1920, 7). He believed that “a serious and heavy responsibility” which had been “placed on all proprietors, publishers of, and contributors to newspapers” was not in denunciation of the Government because “no editor has any licence given him to exceed the bounds of decency and moderation and we speak of Nigeria” (31 May 1918, 6). Ajasa thus subsequently attempted to counsel his contemporaries against what he called “unbridled personal vilification or deliberately hostile effusions against authority” (Omu 1978, 45). With his overwhelming confidence in British and European officials, the *Pioneer* emphasised that, “We in West Africa have been for generations under British rule and with that rule we are satisfied” (7 September 1917, cited in Coleman 1958, 453), and enthusiastically reported about the Empire Day Celebration (Queen Victoria’s Official Birthday) in 1918, although the other two newspapers did not take on much notice (31 May 1918, 6). According to the *Pioneer*, “British rule is not dictated by a sense of possession but by a sense of obligation. Its aims are to serve rather than to rule, to nourish rather than to devour; to help rather than to crush” (30 August 1918, 5).

Ajasa’s paper was frequently derided as the “unofficial organ of Sir Frederick Lugard” and “charged with the crime of being partial to Government and all Europeans whether they be right or wrong” (NP, 10 October 1919, 6), not only by the Lagos contemporaries, but also by other West African journals. The *Gold Coast Leader*, for instance, concluded that the reason for the notoriety of the *Nigerian Pioneer* was “its failure of becoming the People’s paper” (2-30 March 1918, quoted in LWR, 29 June & July 1918, 4). Nevertheless, the *Pioneer* bore up under these reproaches and

responded undauntedly:

These things will not deter us from keeping “the nobler course,” as we are convinced that there are two sides to every question... We should endeavour to give the best advice at our disposal to Government but not trying to disseminate disloyalty and discontent among the people. Governments err as individuals but it should always be borne in mind that such errors are never intentional. No human being is infallible, journalists included, hence we are never inclined to sling mud at our contemporaries from our Editorial chair; we leave this low form of journalism to those who delight in it as we are convinced it is the result of a faulty system of education and bad social environment (10 October 1919, 6).

A typical example of Ajasa’s pro-British attitude is seen in its descriptions of the Eleko Affair in 1919 (Cole 1975, 122-36; Omu 1978, 222-27). Prince Eshugbayi (Eleko), the head of Dosumu House, was suspended from high office in October 1919, because of his “irregular” treasonable activities, such as frequently contacting the Muslim communities and conferring the chieftaincy title on a certain Muslim during the Governor’s absence. Governor Clifford “destooled” Eleko in October 1919, but reinstated him later the same year.<sup>96</sup> This event made the polarisation of the educated elite more decisive, as they had already been distinguished in their political attitudes following the discussions on water rate tax in 1908.<sup>97</sup> Whilst the anti-Government party—led by Herbart Macaulay and his associates, such as Thomas H. Jackson, James Bright Davies, J. E. Shyngle and J. K. Coker—supported Eleko, others—including

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<sup>96</sup> Eleko Eshugbayi was chosen in 1901 as head of Dosumu house after the death of Oyekan in 1900. Before 1919, he had conflicts with the Colonial Government in 1908 and 1916, when he supported the opposition to the water rate tax. Eleko was deposed in October 1919 on suspicion of forming a conspiracy with Muslims, but was reinstated in December 1919. Eleko was again deposed in December 1920 when he refused to accept Governor Clifford’s advice to dissociate himself from Herbart Macaulay. This series of conflicts between Eleko and the Colonial Government continued up to 1931 (Omu 1978, 222-27).

<sup>97</sup> See footnote 311 on page 280 for water rate tax in 1908.



Kitoyi Ajasa, Henry Carr, Dr. J. K. Randle and Dr. Orisadipe Obasa—supported the Government. When the Lagos press disputed the “destoolment” of Eleko, the *Pioneer* appealed to the public, claiming that the Government’s letter on the suspension of Prince Eleko was “a concise and most correct statement of all the facts that have given rise to the disturbed state of the political atmosphere that has so long given great anxiety to Government and the right thinking class of the community” (21 November 1919, 6). J. K. Coker, who was on the side of Eleko, expressed his disagreement with the *Pioneer* and wrote: “this is the usual method used always by the Pioneer to poison the minds of Governors against the people as to mislead them to adopt unwarranted and unnecessarily hard measures which always end in bloodshed” (LS 26 November 1919, 5). In response, the *Pioneer* attacked J. K. Coker, describing him as an “obscure person” from Abeokuta, “pseudo politician”, and “farmer” who gave the editor, Ajasa, “the impression of a chimpanzee at the zoo” (5 December 1919, 6).<sup>98</sup> It seems Ajasa expressed his contempt for J. K. Coker, a plantation owner in Agege, partly because Coker came from Abeokuta and not from Lagos, a “seat of civilisation”. In addition, this incident would be one of the examples which shows how Lagos newspaper texts became arena of exchanges between readers and the editors.

Compared to its contemporaries, the *Pioneer* inserted more articles relating to news in Europe and on leisure activities of the Europeans and educated elite in Lagos,

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<sup>98</sup> Then, the *Lagos Standard* published a letter from O. T. Somefun, a Secretary of Agege Planters’ Union, in support of J. K. Coker. It said: “Mr. J.K. Coker is an ordinary man unostentatious educated at Lagos not a Lawyer or Doctor nor has he ever had the advantage of being educated in England as the Pioneer, but 99% of the community of Lagos has claimed him as a leader of no mean order... he is not a Government made man, but a man of the people a man in whom the people repose confidence and affection... The Pioneer and his associates cannot know him because he is not a regular attendant of Government House, Ball room, Concerts, Lodge rooms Race meetings and other association of that kind familiar to the “Pioneer” but moving amongst the people mostly the poor and the suffering ones” (17 December 1919, 7).

such as “fancy ball”, musicals and sports. Furthermore, from its beginning, poems by John Moray Stuart-Young (1881-1939), a Manchester trader and poet who settled in Onitsha in 1909, were inserted in the paper.<sup>99</sup> The *Pioneer* suffered various denunciations from its contemporaries until its extinction in 1936, however, the fact remains that the circulation of the *Pioneer* (500 weekly in the 1920s) was not bad compared with other Lagos newspapers (Omu 1978, 260-62). It showed the *Pioneer* had certain supporters for its almost reckless enthusiasm for the British Empire. What is also notable is that the *Pioneer* gradually expanded its commercial interests to the hinterland of Nigeria. At first, the paper had its agencies in Sierra Leone and in the Gold Coast; however, their commercial area shrunk from 1917, instead adding some agencies which could deliver the paper to southern and northern Nigeria.<sup>100</sup>

## 2.7. Treading a Thorny Path?: Newspaper Enterprises in Lagos

As we have seen, the journalists in Lagos launched their newspapers with high motivations and hopes for constructing a better future. The Lagos press was considered to be the media of furnishing information, educator of the masses, recorder of local

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<sup>99</sup> Between 1917 and 1919 his poems appeared twice a month occasionally using pseudonym such as Odeziaku, O’Dazi Aku and O. Dazi Aku. According to Newell (2006a), between the 1910s and late 1930s, Stuart-Young “occupied numerous spaces in African owned newspapers, including letters pages, poetry corners, occasional columns and columns of his own” (108).

<sup>100</sup> List of Commercial Agencies of the *Nigerian Pioneer* (1914):

Mr. Ohekanmi Oheshiku, Abeokuta Town;  
Messrs G. B. Pollivant & Co., Ltd., Wasimi, Lafenwa, Iddo Gate, Ibanda, Kano, Zaria;  
Mr. W. A. Aprekuma, Clabar;  
Mr. Dayrell, Onitsha;  
Mr. Richard Savage, Secondee [Gold Coast];  
Mr. Whillie Dove, Sierra Leone.

List of Commercial Agencies of the *Nigerian Pioneer* (1917-1919)

Mr. Kuforij, Kemta Town;  
Messrs G. B. Pollivant & Co., Ltd., Wasimi, Iddo Gate and Ibanda, Kano, Jos;  
Mr. Shobande, Omida Market, Ibara, and Ago Odo, Abeokuta.

history and culture, and critics of authorities in order to prevent “autocracy and anarchy”. It was also the symbol of and precondition for a progressive society. When the *Nigerian Chronicle* objected to the “rumour” that Sir Frederick Lugard’s preference for Northern Nigeria would transfer the capital of Nigeria to Kaduna, the editor raised the existence of the press as one of the reasons as to why Lagos should remain the capital. The editor asked, “How could these people [in Kaduna], in the face of coercion and threats and in the absence of a Press in their own District voice their grievances and make themselves heard?” (13 February 1914, 2)

Several studies suggest that the newspaper’s role was as a representative of the “public”, especially before 1922 when local Africans did not have representatives in the British colonial administration (Coker 1968; Omu 1978; Duyile 1987), and the editors of Lagos newspapers themselves had a strong sense of mission as representing “public opinion”. What should be highlighted here, however, is that their sphere of influence was limited and that they could only be the representative of certain literate people in Nigeria. The *Pioneer* suggests that it was “somewhat bold” if Lagos newspapers claimed to represent “public opinion”, purely because their circulation approximated “to the one hundredth part of the educated public”, which accordingly represented only “the one hundred and fiftieth part of the population of Nigeria” (29 May 1914, 6).<sup>101</sup> In 1914, five newspapers in Lagos were said to be “supposed to represent the voice of all the inhabitants throughout the United Nigeria”, yet each page of a paper was “nearly half that of any such contemporary issued in other parts of the world” (LS, 18 March 1914, 5). In addition, local news was frequently written from a Yoruba and European centred

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<sup>101</sup> The *Pioneer* continued: “Public opinion” in Nigeria has yet to be formed, and until the day when Education and means of communication have given the opportunity for such formation, it would appear more honest if, in the place of representing their opinions as those of “the people,” they were put forward as personal opinions, backed only by their writer and his readers (NP, 29 May 1914, 6).

view. As has been shown in the section of the *Record*, the news in the columns concerning Northern Nigeria often refer only to European or Yoruba officials—and not to Hausa people.

Despite their crucial roles in Lagos society, the “difficulties of journalism and the strenuous life of an editor” were described as “proverbial” (LS, 15 September 1909, 4) and financial problems often caused the editors to cease publication. From the early period, it seems that the press was a short-lived and unprofitable enterprise (see Table 3 below and Appendix 5). The *Lagos Times* noted in 1882 that its proprietor was glad that he had not entered into this business with a commercial speculation, otherwise they “might have begun to think whether we had not better give it up as an unprofitable and unpromising concern” (11 January 1882, 3). In 1894, the editor of the *Record* attempted to increase profitability, and accordingly claimed that the paper’s “journalistic venture” was “a private enterprise undertaken for profit” and not “a public benevolent institution nor a philanthropic charity” (21 April 1894, 2); however, the difficult situation continued and the *Standard* even stated that the “callousness of defaulting subscribers, whom prayers and threats of exposure have alike failed to move, have been almost too much for us” (14 September 1910, 4). As a result, “the average lease of life” of early Lagos newspapers did “not ordinarily extend beyond a few months or years at the most”, and “not a few ventures both here” and on the West Coast of Africa had “sprung up, flourished a while, and become extinct” (LS, 26 September 1900, 3).

**Table 3: The Life-Spans of Selected Lagos Newspapers**

	<b>LT</b>	<b>LO</b>	<b>E&amp;LC</b>	<b>LWR</b>	<b>LS</b>	<b>NC</b>	<b>NP</b>
<b>Beginning</b>	Nov.1880- Oct. 1883 Dec.1890- Oct. 1891	Feb.1882- July 1890	Mar. 1883	Jan.1891	Sep.1894	Nov.1908	Jan.1914
<b>End</b>		July 1890	Oct.1888	Dec.1930	Jan.1920	Mar.1915	Dec.1936
<b>Duration</b>	4 yr	8 yr 5 m	5 yr 6 m	40 yr	25 yr 4 m	6 yr 3 m	23 yr

(Omu 1978, 252-253)

There were at least four reasons behind the difficulties and lack of profitability experienced by the newspaper business. First was the shortage of an English reading population in early colonial Lagos: this lack of a reading public was frequently noted in early Lagos newspapers. As the *Standard* emphasised in the beginning of the twentieth century, it was generally agreed that “the literary progress of the community” had not “kept pace with the advancement of the colony along other lines” (26 September 1900, 3), and the society of Lagos was still “largely illiterate” with “only a very small percentage of the population ... [able to] read English, and of these a still smaller number who appreciate at its right value the worth of a newspaper” (21 September 1904, 2).

Though the majority of indigenous people in southern Nigeria were illiterate in English, as “the proportion of illiterate people” was approximately “149 in 150” in Nigeria in 1914 (NP, 29 May 1914, 6), regarding Lagos alone, there were growing numbers of literate groups. The census of Lagos in 1891 shows that, out of a total “Blacks and Mulattoes” population of 85,457, 5.5% (4,714) were reported to be literate, or partly literate, in the English language (*Lagos Annual Report* for 1891). This number rose to approximately 10,000 in 1914 (NP, 29 May 1914, 6), and in 1921, 10% of the

population of Lagos was able to read and write (either in English or vernacular), whilst 20% were only able to read (Baker 1974, 76). In 1952, only 8.5% of the total population over the age of seven was categorised as literate in Roman script in the whole of Nigeria, but this percentage went up to 64% in Lagos (Coleman 1958, 135).<sup>102</sup> What we also have to note is that the importance of reading had been repeatedly emphasised in Lagos society from the 1850s. As Brown (1964) points out, “Local Africans were encouraged to read newspapers and periodicals to acquaint themselves with the rest of the world... [and] the practice of exchanging reading materials became common” (272). Moreover, the need for literate Nigerians in the lower level bureaucracy, schools, churches and businesses, gave indigenous people the impetus to acquire proficiency in the English language: the ability to read and write in English was regarded as the stepping stone to a middle-class career. Aspirants for primary education continued to grow in accordance with British imperial expansion, especially following the amalgamation of the Southern and Northern Colonies and the establishment of the Protectorate of Nigeria in 1914. “By 1901 over 1,100 civil servants and commercial clerks worked in Lagos. This number rose to over 5,300 by 1921” (Zachernuk 2000, 48-49).

Accordingly, the growth in literacy in English was promoted along with the spread of primary and secondary education. As can be seen from Table 4, the educated population grew dramatically between 1906 and just before the independence of Nigeria. In 1912, there were 150 primary schools in southern Nigeria offering education to 35,716 students and, by 1937, this number had increased to 3,533 primary schools with an enrolment of 218,610 students. The secondary schools also grew steadily from 10 in 1912 to 26 in 1937. The Anglicans and the Wesleyans mission bodies taught literacy in

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<sup>102</sup> In Western, Eastern and Northern region of Nigeria, 18%, 16% and 2% were literate in Roman Script respectively in 1952 (Coleman 1958, 135).

Yoruba extensively in their primary schools and English was taught mostly in the upper classes (Awoniyi 1975, 68-69). Therefore, there were growing numbers of potential newspaper readers in Lagos.

**Table 4: Western Education in Southern Nigeria (Eastern and Western Regions)**

Year	Schools		Pupils in Attendance	
	Primary	Secondary	Primary School	Secondary School
1906	126	1	11,872	20
1912	150	10	35,716	67
1926	3,828	18	138,249	518
1937	3,533	26	218,610	4,285
1947	4,984	43	538,391	9,657
1957	13,473	176	2,343,317	28,208

(Coleman 1958, 134)

The second reason for the Lagos press's difficulty was the insufficiency in people's appreciation of the importance of newspapers. The reading community in early colonial Lagos was so small that the news transmitted "by word of mouth" made the people reluctant to patronise the newspaper (Omu 1978, 83). In response to Dr Africanus Horton's (1835-1883) letter of appreciation, the *Lagos Times* pointed out that it was rare to receive such warm encouragement as "Journalism here" was said to be a "a thankless task". Although the paper served the interests of "the country and race generally", the editor was met with the "cold indifference" of the people (11 January 1882, 3). According to the *Lagos Standard*, the "average Lagos youth" had not "come to consider his paper a necessity", and what engrossed his attention in the paper was only "the report of a ball or a concert" at which he had figured (26 September 1900, 3). People's interest in the press was described as "ephemeral" only "on the occasion of any national crisis, or the enactment of any severe or oppressive measure" (14 September

1910, 4).

Thirdly, literate people in Lagos were reluctant to purchase their own copy of a newspaper but instead opted to share with “three or four” friends. If the number of who borrowed newspaper from their friends increased, the income of the press would never grow (LS, 26 September 1900, 3; LWR, 7 June 1919, 3). The editors sincerely hoped that each reader would start to buy their own copy so that the Lagos press would not suffer from the unprofitability of business.

With the aforementioned in consideration, it is useful to provide the cost of the newspaper price in relation to different income groups in Lagos. In the 1880s, each copy of newspaper cost 5-6 pence for subscribers and 7-9 pence for non-subscribers (see Table 5). This price fell to 3-4 pence between 1890 and 1916, and roughly stayed 3-6 pence between 1917 and 1920. According to Gann and Duignan (1978), in nineteenth century colonial Lagos, African civil servants in a senior position enjoyed a “considerable degree of social status, and a good rate of pay” with salaries in excess or equal to those of white officials in Britain (260-61). As we can see from Table 6, African civil servants of the lowest rank earned between £24 and £36 per annum at the end of the nineteenth century. Other white-collar occupations were paid relatively well. In 1909-1910, a typist at the office earned around £24 per annum (LS, 19 May 1909, 5) and a schoolmaster for an out-station in Western Province was employed by the Lagos Government at the salary of £50 to £70 per annum (LS, 14 September 1910, 5). On the other hand, the wage for artisans, that remained similar between the 1880s and 1920s, was £36 to £66 per annum (2-4s per day) for carpenters, £36 to £72 (1s 6d-5s per day) for blacksmiths, £36 to £60 (1s 6d - 5d) for printers (see Appendix 4) (*Lagos Blue Book* 1884, 95; NC 2 January 1911; *Blue Book Colony of Southern Nigeria* 1912, Y2; *Blue*



*Book of Nigeria Colony and Protectorate* 1924, 516).<sup>103</sup>

It would also be useful to look at the average price of daily commodities and groceries in the *Blue Book of Lagos* and the *Blue Book of Nigeria Colony and Protectorate* so that we can then compare their prices with the subscription costs of newspapers. In the 1880s, instead of purchasing a copy of a newspaper (at 5-6 pence for subscribers and 7-9 pence for non-subscribers), people could purchase either 5 kg of cassava or a bunch of plantain, which were both 6 pence each, or even luxurious items, like 1 lb of tea or sugar, which were 6 pence and 5 pence respectively. Furthermore, 1 lb of pork, mutton or beef, which were 7 pence and 9 pence respectively, could have been purchased (*Lagos Blue Book* 1884, 96).<sup>104</sup> In the pre-World War I period of around 1914, instead of purchasing a copy of a newspaper (at 3-4 pence), people could feed themselves with either one-and-a-half or two pans of *Gari*, or 3-4 bundles of *Eyo* (spinach) or a half-pan of *Elubo* (yam flour) (126-132). Olukoju (2000) also gives us useful data on the rise of cost of living in Lagos from 1914-1945. Whilst three tubers of yams cost 6 pence in 1884, it became 1 shilling in the pre-World War I period around 1914, 2 shillings 6 pence in 1918, and 2 shillings-3 shillings 6 pence in 1923. While a bunch of plantain cost 6 pence each in 1884, it became 1-3 shillings in 1922 (*Lagos Blue Book* 1884, 96; *Blue Book of Nigeria Colony and Protectorate* 1922, 417; Olukoju 2000, 126-132).

During World War I, the price of the commodities and rent rose, and people may have preferred to spend their earnings on their living essentials rather than on additional

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<sup>103</sup> The wage of unskilled labourers in Lagos was 9 pence a day on average throughout the period 1880 to 1910 (Hopkins 1966b, 148). An editorial of the *Nigerian Chronicle* pointed out that the minimum wages of the government workmen (4d to 6d per day) did not cover the cost of living as each meal costs 2d at least (NC, 20 January 1911, 2 & 7). However, the Lagos government recorded that the quality of the work was not worthy of 9d per day (*Annual Reports for Southern Nigeria 1899-1900*, 26-27).

<sup>104</sup> The food price remained remarkably steady between 1880 and 1910 (Hopkins 1966b, 148).

items, such as newspapers and books (Olukoju 2000); however, in the 1930s, changes in the production of newspapers made its price more accessible and economical for people (Coker 1968, 82-84). As a result, we can therefore conclude that, when compared to the prices of daily commodities and when considering the average income of different earning groups in Lagos, newspapers were not considered to be economical items—except for those people who were well-paid or part of white-collar occupations.

**Table 5: Price of Selected Lagos Newspapers**

Title	LT	LO	E&LC	LWR	LS	NC	NP
<b>Subscription (annual)</b>	10s	8s 6d	8s 6d	15s (1896) 17s Home/19s Abroad (1917) 26s Home/28s Abroad (1919) £1.19 Lagos/£2.40 other Nigeria / £2.8 Foreign (1920)	12s 6d (1895) 15s (1910)	13s	£1. 6
<b>Single copy for non-subscriber</b>	9d (6d for subscriber)	7d (5d)	7d (6d)	3d (1896) 4d (1917) 6d (1919)	3d (1895) 6d (1910)	3d	4d (1917) 6d (1920)

**Table 6: Annual Salaries of African Civil Servants in Lagos in 1898**

Rank in Civil Service	Salary
Clerk, 6 <sup>th</sup> class	£24-£36
Clerk, 5 <sup>th</sup> class	£42-£48
Clerk, 4 <sup>th</sup> class	£54-£66
Clerk, 3 <sup>rd</sup> class	£72-£96
Clerk, 2 <sup>nd</sup> class	£108-£150
Clerk, 1 <sup>st</sup> class	£200-£250
Chief clerk	£300

(Gann and Duignan 1978, 261)

The fourth reason for the difficulties experienced was that the revenue rarely exceeded the necessary expenditure for publishing newspapers. The major source of income was newspaper sales and paid advertisements, and this was supplemented by donations,<sup>105</sup> which previous studies point out (Omu 1978, 80-81), and also by several other businesses, such as printing, book-binding and sales of commodities.

From 1880 onwards, newspaper offices had several roles in society: they also worked as printing offices, educational facilities for printing training, book shops and stationery stores, and sometimes as mercantile stores and estate agencies. Most of Lagos's newspaper offices undertook printing and bookbinding jobs, and sold books, pamphlets, cards and notes. The *Lagos Times* sold the pamphlet of "The Agricultural Question of Sierra Leone" by H. H. Lardner, at the price of 6 pence for subscribers (25 May 1881, 3). The *Lagos Observer* provided printing training for apprentices (29 March 1883, 1). The *Eagle and Lagos Critic* advertised the young cocoa plants, which were available at reasonable prices through their office (8 & 29 January 1887, 4). The *Lagos Standard* sold books, stationery, postage stamps and postcards at the office, and also offered printing services, such as "Customs Entry Forms at 1d a set of 4" and "Apprentice Indenture forms at 1 shilling a set of 3" (14 September 1898, 5). In addition, the *Standard's* office served not only as an agency which rented estates, such as a "commodious dwelling house, with shop stores" close to bank (30 September 1908, 5), a "desirable premises" at Tinubu Square (24 March 1909, 5), a "commodious dwelling house" and a "desirable dwelling storey house" for mercantile business at Balogun Square (17 June 1914, 7), but also "a piano in splendid condition" which had just arrived a few months earlier in Lagos (30 September 1908, 5).

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<sup>105</sup> The *Lagos Standard* inserted a short notice of appreciation: "We acknowledge with much thanks donation of tenshillings and sixpence sent to us by one of our wellwishers in appreciation of our arduous work" (LS, 8 January 1913, 7).

The revenue from the advertisements is not easy to ascertain, because rates for inserting advertisements were not always fixed or did not appear on the paper<sup>106</sup> and because some advertisements were inserted by the press offices themselves, which did not become income. However, Omu (1978) attempts to estimate the annual revenue of the *Lagos Weekly Record* and the *Lagos Standard* from 1895-1918 as an average of £315 and £303 respectively (see Table 7).

**Table 7: Estimated Revenue of the *Lagos Weekly Record* and the *Lagos Standard***

	<i>Lagos Weekly Record</i>	<i>Lagos Standard</i>
1895	£260	£202
1900	£340	£235
1905	£290	£310
1910	£300	£360
1915	£350	£360
1918	£350	£350

(Omu 1978, 92)

Furthermore, even if the revenues stated above are equivalent to the income for chief clerks in British colonial administration, the costs for publishing newspapers also seemed to be a huge burden for press proprietors, as they often employed staff, such as printers, typists, compositors, bookkeepers and sales clerks. The *Lagos Times*, for instance, advertised for a clerk at the wage of £50 per annum (14 September 1881, 1).

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<sup>106</sup> In the 1880s, it cost 3 shilling 6 pence to secure one insertion of advertisement under twelve lines in both the *Eagle and Lagos Critic* and the *Lagos Observer*. In 1892, the *Lagos Weekly Record* offered 15 shillings for half column advertisement, 4 shillings for advertisement under twelve lines (one insertion) and 6 pence for every additional line. In 1916 the *Nigerian Pioneer* set a price of 5 shillings for advertisement under twelve lines (one insertion), of 6 pence for every additional line and of 2 shillings 5 pence for birth, death or marriage notice. Charges for inserting advertisements do not always appear on the paper as the rates were sometimes furnished on application.

The *Lagos Standard* noted that the entire work of publishing newspapers “devolved” upon “the shoulder of the editor singularly, who is at one and the same time his own reporter, news editor, leader, writer, advertising agent, etc., all of which duties in a well-equipped office in civilised countries would be divided among as many responsible heads” (14 September 1910, 5); however, they advertised for a clerk who was a “good shorthand writer and typist” in 1909, and two compositors in 1910 (3 February 1909, 5; 5 October 1910, 5). In 1918, the *Nigerian Pioneer* inserted an advertisement for “Native Book-Keeper” who had skills in both typewriting and shorthand, and “Good Clerks with trading experience for stations in the Northern Provinces” at what was described as a “good” salary (30 August 1918, 5); in addition, in 1920, they also wanted a correspondent clerk in Warri at the wage of £12 per month and quarters (27 February 1920, 10) and a printer for £12 per month (22 October 1920, 6). Despite the limited information on wages of each member of staff in the print offices, it seems reasonable to state that the expenditure on newsprint—wages for staff, rent for the offices, cost of printing newspapers<sup>107</sup> and sometimes court fines—often exceeded the revenue.

The above-mentioned four points suggest that journalism was generally not a successful commercial enterprise in Nigeria between 1880 and 1920. Although the

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<sup>107</sup> As has been mentioned in footnote 94, all the Lagos newspapers which this chapter especially focuses on—the *Anglo-African*, the *Lagos Times and Gold Coast Colony Advertiser*, the *Lagos Observer*, the *Eagle and Lagos Critic*, the *Lagos Weekly Record*, the *Lagos Standard* and the *Nigerian Chronicle*—had their own printing press, apart from the *Nigerian Pioneer* from its beginning in 1914 up to the 1930s. It is difficult to present the precise costs that editors had to bear for printing, but the following examples suggest that publication of newspapers, even at their own press, incurred substantial expense. Firstly, The Lagos Colonial Government voted £70 for printing the Lagos official handbooks for 1897 (LWR, 11 June 1898, 6). Although the actual number of copies published that year cannot be found, it is estimated to be around 1,000, as between 720 and 840 copies of the *Annual Report of Lagos* were published annually between 1881 and 1887. Secondly, there was an open letter suggesting an estimated cost of £20 for printing and binding 1,000 copies of the proceedings of a public lecture on “African Leaders” in 1914 (LS, 9 December 1914, 6). Thirdly, in 1920, one of the members of the Nigerian Branch of the National Congress of British West Africa, Andrew Thomas, paid £7 10d toward the cost of printing 1,500 leaflets of English and Yoruba-language propaganda (LWR, 10 July 1920, 5).

newspaper market expanded as a result of improvements in communications following the amalgamation of Lagos Colony and the Southern Nigeria Protectorate in 1906, in addition to the establishment of press distribution agencies in all parts of the countries, their revenues seemed to not always have exceeded their expenses. Nevertheless, journalism continued to attract new participants,<sup>108</sup> who believed in the “Newspapermen’s Burden”, and the newspapers’ power to influence the trend of events, improve society and realise racial unity. The ambition and sincere hope of journalists in Lagos is represented in Thomas Horatio Jackson’s comment in 1919:

The Native Press... has now become a national institution inseparable from advanced native ideas of culture: and it has justified its existence... as the faithful custodian of native rights and liberties and the lucid exponent of national ideals and social aspirations. Journalistic ventures in West Africa have always been a labour of love assuring little or no financial profit save a hand-to-mouth existence to their patriotic promoters. But with the present undertaking, we hope to combine the two—a spirit of intense patriotism and a spirit of successful commercial enterprise. We are quite prepared to assume all the risks inseparable from such great undertakings whether they be of financial loss or gain of courting official disfavour or of being persecuted or prosecuted; only we desire the ardent support of our readers (LWR, 7 June 1919, 3).

## 2.8. Conclusion

In this chapter, the characteristics of seven English language newspapers in Lagos have been chronologically detailed, running from 1880 to 1920. In the 1880s, the *Lagos Times* and *Gold Coast Colony Advertiser* formed standard formats of succeeding Lagos

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<sup>108</sup> There must be several aspirations to launch newspaper business which resulted in failure. S. H. Pease was reported to be preparing “the first Daily Nigerian newspaper, for his benighted fellow countrymen in Nigeria” but no subsequent news can be found (LWR, 20 March 1920, 6).

newspapers; the *Lagos Observer* enriched the contents of the paper, as well as demonstrating the oppositional attitude to the British Colonial Government; and the *Eagle and Lagos Critic* was a pro-British paper, with more personal news relating to the editor and his relatives and acquaintances in Lagos elite society. The *Lagos Standard* and the *Nigerian Chronicle* were two culture-oriented papers, both of which focused on domestic issues. The *Lagos Weekly Record*, by John Payne Jackson and Thomas H. Jackson, held the most influential nationalist views during this period. Furthermore, the *Nigerian Pioneer* was significantly pro-British and the most reproached, yet never succumbed to criticism from either inside or outside Lagos. There was a consistent demand for vernacular newspapers, and several attempts were made, such as the *Iwe Irohin Eko* of 1888-1892 and *In Leisure Hours* of the 1910-1940s, before the efflorescence of Yoruba newspapers in the 1920s. Despite the fact that the Lagos press had a strong sense of mission, publishing enterprises were often regarded as economically unprofitable.

There are three important points for understanding early Lagos newspapers. First, as outlined in this chapter, newspaper texts were not produced by the single efforts of editors but were, more accurately, the joint collaborative works of editors, correspondents and readers in Lagos, the interior of Nigeria, other British West African countries and, in rare cases, England. Although previous studies of Nigerian newspapers focus on editors and proprietors of the press, the examinations in this chapter show that newspaper texts were created as per the interactions between editors and various contributors—sometimes anonymous or using pseudonyms. Letters from readers included, on rare occasions, those from female contributors, such as “A Woman”—a member of the Lagos Women’s Diamond Jubilee Society who wrote to the editor of the

*Lagos Standard* about the usage of the Ladies Jubilee Memorial Fund (8 June 1898, 3).

The newspaper's contents reflected the tides of the period, and changed, according to the reactions and needs of the readers.

Second, there were active interactions between the Lagos press and newspapers in other parts of British West Africa; not only did Lagos newspapers consistently quote articles from newspapers in Sierra Leone, the Gold Coast, England, and occasionally, in other European countries and America, the editors of Lagos newspapers also attempted to communicate with the envisioned readers outside Lagos, and sent messages to newspapers in Sierra Leone and the Gold Coast through their newspapers; like the "Tit-bits" column in the *Lagos Observer*. As for the percentage of articles extracted from newspapers abroad, the *Nigerian Pioneer* exceeded others. The *Lagos Standard* had fewer excerpts than the *Lagos Weekly Record*, and the *Nigerian Chronicle* also focused more on culture-oriented domestic issues.

In addition, as the following chapters shall show in detail, the editors of the Lagos newspaper acquired daily information from journals published in other parts of West Africa, such as the *Sierra Leone Weekly News*, the *Gold Coast Chronicle*, the *Gold Coast Leader*; and those of Britain, like *The Times*, the *African Times* and the *West African Mail*. As well as these intellectual ties with other parts of British West Africa, the educated elite in southern Nigeria had blood relations, namely, extended families, in coastal areas of Sierra Leone, the Gold Coast and sometimes abroad. As will be shown in detail in Chapter 6, the educated elite's travels abroad had attracted huge attention in the Lagos newspapers: their whole journeys were occasionally reported, such as, for instance, that of John Otonba Payne, who travelled to British West Africa, Brazil and England between 1886 and 1887.



Third, from the early twentieth century, we can see a gradual transition from the press's West African coastal focus towards the rest of Nigeria. In addition to the educated elite's strong connections across the coastal areas of West Africa, improvements in communications made it possible to establish press distribution agencies in all parts of Nigeria and, accordingly, to collect news from there, especially following the amalgamation of Lagos Colony and the Southern Nigeria Protectorate in 1906, and the establishment of the British Colony of Nigeria in 1914. Whilst 1880s Lagos newspapers had their commercial agencies in England, Lagos and other parts of British West Africa—such as Freetown, Cape Coast, Quittah, Accra, Benin and Fernando Po—the early twentieth century Lagos newspapers expanded their commercial interests to inland Nigeria. The *Lagos Weekly Record* began to have agencies in Oshogbo, Ibadan and Kano from 1919. Initially, the *Nigerian Pioneer* had its agencies in Sierra Leone and in the Gold Coast, but reduced its commercial area from 1917 and, instead, added some agents who could deliver the paper to the hinterland of Lagos and to Northern Nigeria. It seems that the early twentieth century Lagos press came to reflect the interest of their readers, which were no longer exclusively geared towards the coast and Britain.

The topics on which the Lagos press focused changed according to the needs of the readers, as well as the press's conscious project of reconstructing their society. As will be shown in Chapter 4 through to Chapter 6 of this thesis, memorial movements became popular in the 1880s and, from the beginning of the twentieth century, agricultural and industrial associations drew attention. The associations relating to the British Empire reached their height of popularity during Queen Victoria's Golden and Diamond Jubilees and World War I.

Before examining, in Chapter 4, how the Lagos press utilised some associational activities as a model for overcoming social cleavage in Lagos, an overview of associational activities from the mid-nineteenth century to the early twentieth century in Southern Nigeria will be provided in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER 3

### AN OVERVIEW OF ASSOCIATIONAL LIFE IN COLONIAL LAGOS

#### 3.1. Introduction

##### 3.1.1. Studies on Associational Life in Colonial Lagos

Voluntary association, which was the “most essential feature of Victorian society”, was encouraged and became an essential part of daily and social life among the educated elite in Lagos from the end of the 1850s onwards (Ajayi [1965] 1969, 163).<sup>109</sup> Studies of early Lagos history mention voluntary associations, but few provide details of their activities.

References to the early associational lives of the educated elite, before the establishment of the *Lagos Times and Gold Coast Colony Advertiser* in 1880, can be found both in the London-based newspaper, the *African Times*,<sup>110</sup> and in the personal papers of the CMS missionaries (Brown 1964). One of the earliest was the Young Men’s Benevolent Association, organised in 1859 by *Saro* of Lagos (Kopytoff 1965, 113). The

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<sup>109</sup> Associational activities of indigenous Yoruba people have a longer history. According to N. A. Fadipe (1970), the tendency “to form associations and corporations is very strong among the Yoruba. To a large extent it derives from the organization of the people into compounds. They are formed for the purpose of promoting and protecting common interests in the field of politics, economics, religion, recreation and enjoyment” (243). Chapter 7 of his *The Sociology of the Yoruba* (1970), originally deposited as a Ph.D. dissertation at the University of London in 1939, examines four types of associations in Yorubaland in the 1930s (see footnote 120 for detail). It refers to Age Groups, the Ogboni Society, and *Aro* (a farmers’ association) as existing before European contact. Peel (2000) also examines various indigenous associations in south western Nigeria in the mid-nineteenth century, such as age groups, social clubs, and the Ogboni society (55-59).

<sup>110</sup> This was initiated in 1861, “as the journal of the African Aid Society and edited by Ferdinand Fitzgerald, the society’s secretary, enjoyed considerable prestige in West Africa until its demise in 1884” (Omu 1978, 11).

CMS papers provide a rich source of information, not only of the associations relating to Anglican Churches, such as the Lagos Native Pastorate Auxiliary Associations, organised in 1876 for the purpose of funding African pastorate (Kopytoff 1965, 239), but also of the ethnic associations established by the educated elite of Lagos from the 1860s, such as the Yoruba National Association<sup>111</sup> in 1865, the Ijesha Association<sup>112</sup> in 1876, the Abeokuta Mercantile Association in 1860, and the Ijebu Society which was formed by J. Otonba Payne (Brown 1964, 192-193; Kopytoff 1965, 102-103 & 195-96; Ayandele 1974, 37-40).

*Payne's Lagos and West African Almanack and Diary*, published by John Otonba Payne between 1874 and 1893, also provides some information about associations. This almanac recorded activities of religious, recreational, and literary societies: for instance, the Lagos Church of England School Society, the Lagos Town Library Club, the Lagos Scientific Society, the Lagos Bachelors' Cricket Club, Hoop Race Club, the Esprit de Corps (for concerts and evening entertainments), the Lagos Mutual Improvement Society, the Freemasons' Lodge No. 1,171 and the Lagos Orphean Club.<sup>113</sup>

The social history of early colonial Lagos refers to the associational life of the educated elite. However, a lack of historical sources prevented detailed research on the factual aspects of each association, and the discussions of associational activities often

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<sup>111</sup> The Yoruba National Association was established for the purpose of ending hostilities between Saro, Brazilians, Muslims and indigenous people in the Lagos and its hinterland, through formation of certain unity among those of Yoruba (Oyo or Ibadan) origins. The president of the association was James A. Cole, and the vice-presidents were Mahomodu Alhaji, Saidu Offin, and Francisco Ris (Brown 1964, 192).

<sup>112</sup> The Ijesha Association was originally formed in 1852 and by 1876 had merged with the Ekitiparapo Society (Kopytoff 1965, 195; Ayandele 1974, 39-40). Its stated purpose, "weekly prayer for the admission of missionaries into their country, was especially successful in securing native members, although a separate Brazilian Ijesa Association was later formed" (Brown 1964, 193).

<sup>113</sup> See Plates 8-1- 8-5 in Appendix 8 for regulations, memberships, and subscription fees of these associations.

follow the argument that the educated elite's associational life was an appropriation of Europeanised lifestyles and eventually a basis for nationalist movements. While studies covering nineteenth century colonial Lagos focus on Christian religious, literary and recreational associations, comprising members of the privileged and limited numbers of the coastal elite (Brown 1964, 239-253, 257-70 & 302-309; Echeruo 1977; Mann 1985; Zachernuk 2000, 29-31), the researches on early twentieth century Lagos discuss political organisations and trade unions that appeared during the interwar period (Coleman 1958, 211-213; Zachernuk 2000, 19-79). In addition, urbanisation in the 1920s and 1930s promoted the development of self-help organisations, cooperative societies and hometown associations, formed by migrants and non-elite members of the city (Falola and Heaton 2008, 139-140). These associational activities were perceived to be meeting people's need for urban affiliation.<sup>114</sup> Since the 1990s, growing numbers of ethnographical studies have been carried out on hometown associations in Southwestern Nigeria, as the source of local development activities (Barkan et al. 1991; Honey and Okafor 1998; Trager 2001).<sup>115</sup> Moreover, studies on associational life have been enriched by the concept of "civil society".<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> There appeared studies focussing on people who were on the boundaries of elite and non-elite, often locally educated with imperfect English literacy. Newell (2002) looks at literary societies in the Gold Coast from the 1920s to 1940s, and some contributors to Barber (2006) examined the personal literary culture of semi-educated people in colonial Anglophone Africa.

<sup>115</sup> There have been researches on ethnic unions and hometown associations since the 1950s—utilising a variety of terms, such as tribal unions, progressive unions and improvement societies. It was in the 1990s that "hometown associations" became the standard term when referring to associations based on ties of kinship and ancestry in a particular town (Abbott 2002, 360 & 369). Discussions of hometown associations "have shifted focus from their role in nationalist political mobilization and their specific urban functions, to their relationship to working-class agitation, their contribution to the development of the hometowns and their role in the imagining of shared ethnic identities" (Bersselaar 2005, 54).

<sup>116</sup> Usage of the concept, "civil society", is diverse. My definition of civil society in this thesis derives from Bratton (1994) who defines civil society as "a public sphere of collective action between the family and the state that coexists in complex relationship of creative tension with the state" (75). Literature on civil society in Africa has centred on the role of voluntary associations as essential for the democratisation process (Barkan et al. 1991; Bratton 1994;

In this research, I would like to show that the associational life of the educated elite, between 1880 and 1920, was more diverse than has been previously discussed. Voluntary associations organised by the educated elite were not always comprised exclusively of the educated African elite. Europeans, indigenous Yoruba people, and Muslims occasionally participated in these activities. Interactions between the educated and semi-educated or non-educated members of Lagos society in the voluntary associations, especially in industrial and agricultural associations, will be discussed in Chapter 5 and interactions in associations relating to the British Empire will be examined in Chapter 6 of this thesis.

As will be discussed in Chapter 6, this thesis concurs with Newell (2002) in applying the neologism “para-colonial” to the complex and multidimensional culture and history of West Africa. Instead of exploring the anti-colonial or pro-British attitudes of local people, this chapter discusses the associational life described in Lagos newspapers from a “para-colonial” perspective, namely, recognising it as not only a product of local culture, but also “as a consequence of the British presence” in West Africa (44). The examination of associational lives reported in the Lagos newspapers could elucidate the way in which the local educated elite interpreted and utilised notions of unity and progress for the future of their society, rather than merely adopting the Western notions of race, civilisation, and Christian morality.

In addition, intellectual networks among the British West African colonies had

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Harbeson et al. 1994). However, Orvis (2001) suggests the problem of applying narrow Western concepts of civil society (with emphasis on the norms of liberal democracy) to African society. He presents a wider conceptualisation, defining civil society as a “sphere of formal or informal, collective activity autonomous from but recognizing the legitimate existence of the state” (20). This definition allows us to consider patron-client networks, ethnic associations and “traditional” authority as components of African civil society. Though they do not comply with democratic standards in the western sense, they can achieve a certain degree of independence from the state and provide a means of political participation and accountability (26-32).

influenced the intellectual culture of the educated elite in Lagos.<sup>117</sup> The British presence in Lagos opened up “Christian, commercial, political, musical, literary, educational, linguistic and other media networks”, made possible by the local acquisition of the English language, which became “the medium of anti- and non-colonial communications between British West Africa and the United States, the West Indies and other West African countries” (Newell 2002, 43). Regarding the newspaper descriptions of associational life in Lagos, we can see affinities with, and also competitive feelings towards, “sister colonies”, such as Sierra Leone and the Gold Coast. For instance, the activities of the School Masters’ Association in Sierra Leone, organised in March 1885 encouraged the formation of the Lagos Teachers’ Union in August 1886 (E&LC, 27 February 1886, 4; LO, 6 March 1886, 3). Chapters 4, 5, and 6 of this thesis will demonstrate how much the educated elite in Lagos cared about and competed with other British West African colonies when establishing associations relating to memorialisation, agriculture and industry, and the British Empire respectively.

### 3.1.2. Outline of Chapter

This chapter gives an overview of the educated elite’s associational life in Southwestern Nigeria between 1880 and 1920, and discusses some useful concepts in examining associational life in colonial Lagos, such as progress, unity and respectability.

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<sup>117</sup> Comparisons of the nature of associational life within British West Africa are far beyond the scope of this research. However, a similar historical development of associational life can be seen on the Gold Coast (Casely-Hayford and Rathbone 1992; Newell 2002). In the colony of Sierra Leone, Krio society in Freetown developed various associations, but they had a more exclusive nature, as can be seen in their Freemason societies (Casely-Hayford and Rathbone 1992, 158 n8).

Examination of the Lagos newspapers will elucidate the diachronic view of associational life in colonial Lagos, including changes of associations according to tides of time and also according to the different interests of the Lagos press. The descriptions of voluntary associations in Lagos newspapers do not provide complete factual descriptions of associations; such as membership, subscription,<sup>118</sup> year of establishment, participation and regulation. However, they enable us to trace not only their activities, but also the ideologies or rhetoric used to discuss associational life—the contexts in which associational life was discussed and how it related to the educated elite’s visions of the future of their society.

Section 2 gives the classification in which the voluntary associations appeared in the Lagos press between 1880 and 1920, identifying seven categories of associations that appeared in the newspapers. Section 3 refers to changes in the character of associations reported in the Lagos newspapers. This will be explored in more detail in the following chapters, but it would be useful to have a diachronic overview of the associational life of the educated elite. Section 4 will consider three essential notions for examining associational lives described in the Lagos newspapers: “unity”, “progress” and “respectability.”

It is important to note that this research focuses less on the female members of associational life than on the male members, despite the active participation of women in such activities in South-western Nigeria (Fadipe 1970; Barnes 1975; Nolte 2008). This is due to the fact that voluntary associations recorded in the Lagos newspapers were often those inaugurated by, and consisting mainly of, the Christian male educated

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<sup>118</sup> The Lagos newspaper articles on voluntary associations rarely include the annual membership fee for their members. Through my research, the only exception I could find was that of the Rifle Club, whose life membership was 5 pounds and annual subscription was ten shillings (LWR, 30 January 1909, 3).



elite. Elite African women in colonial Lagos were encouraged to organise clubs and societies for philanthropic works and recreations in their spare time (Mann 1985, 6-9), but often under the patronage and guardianship of elite males. Notable examples were the Ladies' Social Club (E&LC, 9 & 30 April 1887, 4), the Ladies' Musical Club (LWR, 24 August 1895, 6) and the Women's Queen Victoria Jubilee Society (discussed in Chapter 6) in the nineteenth century; and the Ladies' Recreation Club and the Lagos Ladies' League, whose object was to minister to the sick and poor in the beginning of twentieth century, and the Women's James Johnson Memorial Fund (discussed in Chapter 4) at the end of the 1910s.<sup>119</sup> In addition, this research does not examine clubs and societies formed exclusively for Europeans, such as the Lagos European Literary and Social Club (LWR, 21 April 1894, 2) and the Lagos European Musical and Dramatic Society (LS, 20 February 1907, 3), although the Lagos press occasionally reported their activities.

### 3.2. Categories of Voluntary Associations in the Lagos Newspapers

Voluntary associations recorded in the Lagos newspapers between 1880 and 1920 can be categorised into seven types according to their functions and activities:<sup>120</sup> (1) Religious associations; (2) Recreational associations; (3) Literary societies/educational

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<sup>119</sup> It would be useful to note that these elite African female associations were often under the guardianship of a male chair or patron.

<sup>120</sup> There were several classifications of voluntary associations in South-western Nigeria. N. A. Fadipe (1970) categorised associations in 1930s Yorubaland into four principal types—political, religious, occupational and mutual help, and convivial. Political Associations include: *Ogboni* Secret Society, *Oro* Mystery, Associations of Warriors, Hunters' Guild, Age-Group, Women's Political worshippers of each *orisa*. Occupational Associations and Mutual Help Associations include: Guilds for artisans and traders, the *Aro* (mutual help association for farmers) and the *Esusu* (Slate Club). Convivial Associations include various *Egbe* (243-260). Sandra T. Barnes (1975) classified associations in 1970s Lagos as five categories —religious, primary (ethnic), work-related, recreation and *Esusu*.

societies; (4) Political associations (including ethnic associations); (5) Memorial associations; (6) Occupational associations; and (7) Associations relating to the British Empire.

The first type is religious associations. Although a few associations, organised exclusively by indigenous people or Muslims, can be found in the early twentieth century, religious associations appearing in the Lagos press mostly related to Christianity—such as the Breadfruit Church Young Men’s Christian Association, inaugurated in 1874 (LO, 25 September 1884, 2; E&LC, 27 September 1884, 2), the Yoruba Auxiliary Association of the British Foreign Bible Society (E&LC, 28 August 1886, 4),<sup>121</sup> the Lagos Native Pastorate Education Fund (LO, 11 December 1884, 4; E&LC, 30 April 1885, 3), the Lagos Branch of Civil Service Prayer Union, inaugurated by John O. Payne in 1888, the Young Women’s Christian Association (NC, 3 December 1909, 1) and the Young Women’s Christian Love Association (Egbe Ife) of Ebenezer Native Baptist Church (LS, 10 May 1916, 3). This category also includes associations aiming to achieve certain standards of Christian morality, such as the Young Abstainers’ Union (E&LC, 24 April 1886, 2; LS, 19 June 1895, 3.), the Independent Order of Good Templars,<sup>122</sup> and the Lagos Anti-Smoking League Study Circle (LWR, 16 November 1912, 2).

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<sup>121</sup> Reports of this society in 1896, 1900 and 1901 can be found in Lijadu Family Papers 3/1/12, 3/1/26, 3/1/32 respectively in Nigerian National Archive, University of Ibadan.

<sup>122</sup> The first Charity Lodge of the Independent Order of Good Templars was inaugurated in 1878 in Lagos. Charity Lodge No. 1 celebrated its 4<sup>th</sup> anniversary with pantomimic entertainments (LO, 4 January 1883, 2), and held a public meeting on the 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary, on 22 January 1883. Governor Alfred Moloney acted as the chair and the following “gentlemen” made speeches: “Revs. James Johnson, E. S. Willoughby, G. W. Baxter; Messrs. M. T. John, Catechist, (C.M.S.) C. J. Porter, Joseph N. John, John B. Holloway and Samuel B. Taylor” (LO, 1 February 1883, 4). There were 54 members in 1884 (LO, 14 February 1884, 2). In 1910, there were at least 54 Lodges in Lagos. A. V. A. Willoughby’s anniversary sermon explained that temperance was “self-control” and mentioned “*Three potent factors—Drink, tobacco, women—enough to break down the strongest constitution*” (NC, 11 March 1910, 7-8). A temperance operetta was performed by Iwa Lewa Lodge (LWR, 4 & 11 November 1916, 3)

The second is recreational associations, organising balls, sports and entertainments, such as concerts and musicals. Interestingly, the pastime activities for the British working class, such as variety shows and horse racing, were adopted and transformed as the educated elite's "fancy" entertainments in Lagos (Thompson 1988, 298 & 303-5).<sup>123</sup> The cricket matches, athletic races organised by sport clubs—such as the Athletic Sport Club (LO, 6 & 27 August 1887, 2), the Lagos Cricket Club (E&LC, 27 November & 11 December 1886, 4), the Flor Do Dia Sport Club (LWR, 31 December 1910, 5) and the Lagos Lawn Tennis Club (NP, 4 January 1918, 6)—were usually reported in the sections for short news, like "News Items", "Epitome of News", "General News" and "Weekly Notes". Choral and Dramatic associations were established in Yorubaland, such as the Philharmonic Society, the Ibadan Choral Society, and the Lagos Melodramatic Society (Brown 1964, 257-70 & 302-309; Echeruo 1977, 73-76). There was even a magazine to review entertainments, called the *Lagos Musical Journal*. For instance, in 1915, it contained an alleged "critical report" on the Aster Glee Club's concert, which was held at the Glover Memorial (LWR, 30 October 1915, 3; 27 November 1915, 3).<sup>124</sup> In the twentieth century, recreational activities of other sections of society appeared, such as a masquerade procession of the Brazilian Fior De Dia Society (LWR, 16 January 1909, 3).

The third category is literary/educational societies, with the aim of promoting knowledge and educating its members. Historically, a literary society was not only a

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<sup>123</sup> "During the last two decades a growing number of scholars have explored aspects of the history of leisure in Africa in studies examining the history of radio and film, transformations in popular music, comic opera, dressing up, courtship and romance, Western sport and its indigenization in Africa, social drinking and conviviality" (Akyeampong and Ambler 2002, 2). For a pioneering research on the indigenisation and transformation of Western military drill and procession toward popular leisure in Africa, see Terence O. Ranger, *Dance and Society in Eastern Africa, 1890-1970: The Beni Ngoma* (London: Heinemann Educational, 1975).

<sup>124</sup> The associate editor of the *Lagos Musical Journal*, Samuel Victor White, inaugurated a new magazine, entitled the *Lagos Literary Magazine*, in 1916 (LS, 30 August 1916, 6).

group of people interested in literature; it provided a focal point for elite members of the community to meet, support and promote knowledge and morality, and to discuss various topics, from politics and economy to history and customs for the future of the society. In Victorian England, educational societies for urban working class males were encouraged by the middle class for the purpose of teaching them “respectable” leisure time activities that would replace their heavy drinking habits. In Lagos, from the end of the 1870s, the educated African elite, occasionally together with Europeans, established literary societies. One of the earliest, formed in 1879, was the Lagos Mutual Improvement Society.<sup>125</sup> The Abeokuta Patriotic Society, organised in 1883 (LO, 13 March 1884, 2; Law 1996, 59), and the Aurora literary Club, initiated in 1894, were exclusively for educated Africans (LS, 1 May 1895, 3; 19 June 1895, 2-3). The Young Men’s Literary Association (LS, 20 November 1895, 3), the Lagos Institute in 1901<sup>126</sup> and the Union Club<sup>127</sup> held several lectures (LS, 5 December 1900, 2). There was also a Debating Club, which, in 1909, presented a talk on “the history of Popo tribe” (LWR, 15 September 1909, 3). These literary associations encouraged historical studies and writings (Law 1996) and supported publication of vernacular literature, such as the Native Literature Publishing Society (as discussed in Chapter 2). In Ibadan, “The History of Ibadan, Iwo, Ikirun, Oshogbo and Oyo”, was issued in vernacular by a

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<sup>125</sup> The Lagos Mutual Improvement Society, established under the presidency of Robert Campbell in 1879, was one of the long-lived associations, which continued its activities at least until 1892. In the 1880s, the Society had 150 members, and along with other self-improvement literary societies, like the Lagos Scientific Society, and the Young Men’s Improvement Association, it regularly held public debates and lectures. Topics included Yoruba language, polygamy, education, “credibility of supernatural”, “tribal feelings” and “What will raise Africa, Science or Religion?” (LO, 20 July 1882, 2; 5 July 1883, 3; 11 October 1883, 2; 9 October 1884, 2; LWR, 14 May 1892, 3; (Brown 1964, 284-88).

<sup>126</sup> For the detail of its activity see for instance (Brown 1964; Omu 1978, 105-106; Zachernuk 2000, 53, 195 & 237). Proceeding of its first public meeting was published and can be found at the Ibadan University Library.

<sup>127</sup> The Union Club was established by “for literary improvement” in Lagos. For the members of the Union Club, see (LS, 28 November 1900, 5; 5 December 1900, 2).

society called “Egbe Agba 10 [sic]” (LS, 18 October 1916, 5).<sup>128</sup>

The fourth is political associations, organised for the purpose of achieving particular political goals. This category includes ethnic associations organised by the educated elite for the purpose of maintaining a connection between the educated elite and the indigenous people in the interior region, such as the Yoruba Society,<sup>129</sup> the Egba Deputation and National Club, organised in 1892 (LS, 18 March 1896, 3; 9 March 1898, 5); or with the aim of strengthening relations among immigrants, as in the Sierra Leone and Brazilian Emigrant Association (LO, 20 March 1886, 4). In 1905, the Lagos educated elite formed the Lagos Aborigines’ Protection Society (later known as the Lagos Auxiliary of the Anti-Slavery and Aborigines’ Protection Society,<sup>130</sup> formed for the purpose of serving as “a corrective” for the “imperfections of the Crown Colony System” (Omu 1978, 149). Water rates agitation stimulated political activities in Lagos that resulted, in 1908, in the formation of the first political party, the People’s Union (LWR, 22 October 1910, 4; Coleman 1958, 180).

The fifth category is the memorial associations, which were organised for the purpose of raising money in order to perpetuate the memory of great men and women, often in the form of portraits and tablets. Little attention has been given to this category of associations, organised by the educated elite in Lagos, so Chapter 4 of this thesis will

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<sup>128</sup> This society is probably the Egbe Agba-o-tan (Society of “Elders still exist”) that published *Iwe Itan Ibadan* by I. B. Akinyele (Barber 2009b, 35). “Egbe Agba 10” (the Egbe Agba o tan) of Ibadan published two versions, the “History of Ibadan, Iwo, Ikirun, Oshogbo and Oyo”, the larger one was priced at 2 shillings, and the smaller one at 6d. The *Lagos Standard* reported that few people had heard of this society, but it included Revs. A. B. Akinyele and M.C. Adeyemi as “oracles” and Mr. D. A. Obasa as secretary.

<sup>129</sup> The Yoruba Society actively inserted appeals in the *Eagle* for the purpose of promoting their political and commercial interests (E&LC, 14 & 31 January 1888, 4). It once became inactive but was re-organised at Hebert Macaulay’s residence in 1906 (LWR, 18 August 1906, 3).

<sup>130</sup> For detail see Rina Okonkwo, “The Lagos Auxiliary of the Anti-Slavery and Aborigines’ Rights Protection Society—A Re-examination,” *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 15, 3 (1982):423-433.

examine memorial campaigns appearing in Lagos newspapers between 1880 and 1920 that have not been covered in historiography: for instance, the Dr. N. T. King's Memorial Association, the Glover Memorial Fund, Mrs. Sapara William Memorial Committee, the Blyden Memorial Committee and the James Johnson Memorial Fund.

The sixth is the occupational associations, formed with the object of supporting people of particular vocations, such as the Lagos Teachers' Union, the Butchers' Society and the Mechanics' Mutual Aid Provident and Improvement Association, the Lagos School Teachers' Association (LS, 22 February 1899, 2; 1 March 1899, 2), the Lagos Farmers' Union and the Nigerian Civil Servants' Union, organised in 1912. Though some studies have mentioned the development of trade unions after WWI (Coleman 1958, 111-112), and indigenous occupational associations, such as *Aro* (Farmers' unions) and guilds for artisans and traders (Fadipe 1970, 254-256), there is inadequate research on early occupational associations, especially those relating to agriculture and industry, which were often composed of both elite and non-elite members of the society. Therefore, Chapter 5 discusses the newspaper descriptions of industrial and agricultural associations—such as the Mechanics' Mutual Aid Provident and Mutual Improvement Association, the Lagos Agricultural Society and the Agege Planters' Association—whose object was to support artisans and farmers—as well as the related educational institutes, such as the Rebecca Hussey Slave Charity Institution, Isaac A. Cole's Technological Institution, and the R. B. Blaize's Memorial Industrial Institute.

The seventh group comprises associations relating to the British Empire. This includes voluntary associations relating to public ceremonies of the British Empire in Lagos, such as birthdays, weddings, funerals, and jubilees of the British royal family, colonial exhibitions and Empire Day celebrations, as well as war relief fund-raising societies during WWI. British imperial history includes research on associational life in

the British colonies in the context of the expansion of the British Empire, but there is insufficient detailed research on these activities from the “colonised” viewpoint. Chapter 6, therefore, will explore Nigerians’ experiences of the British Empire by focusing attention on newspaper reports relating to associational activities.

In relation to the above classification, it is important to mention here that the objective of this analytical framework is to simplify the diversity of voluntary associations for this research. One society could have several functions: religious, political and occupational associations sometimes organised recreational and educational events for their members. For instance, the Carpenters’ Union in the nineteenth century, which was supposed to protect carpenters’ rights and dignity, ended up as a dance club.<sup>131</sup> The Church Young Men’s Christian Association, based on Breadfruit Church in Lagos, served as a literary and debating society (LO, 25 February 1888, 2),<sup>132</sup> and the Young Women’s Christian Association, which had the object of promoting the Christian belief in educating females, mostly served as a recreational club (NC, 3 December 1909, 1). The Freemason societies were the most difficult to categorise (probably classified as religious societies as they were comprised only of Christian males) as knowledge of their activities was largely confined to their members (Brown 1964, 248-51; Casely-Hayford and Rathbone 1992).<sup>133</sup> Nevertheless, this

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<sup>131</sup> Notice of a “conversazione” given by the Carpenters Union (LS, 21 October 1896, 2).

<sup>132</sup> At the first public meeting of the YMCA, Breadfruit Church, it was mentioned by James Johnson that the “first object of the Society is the spiritual growth of the members; but Lectures have been given and Essays have been made on such subjects as History, Geography, Geometry, Mechanics. The Bible and kindred subjects, Music, Physiology, etc” (LO, 25 September 1884, 2). On 2 November 1888, it held a debate on the European Marriage Custom. “Three gentlemen, Messrs. J. B. Kenny, E. H. Henly and D. B. Vincent were on the negative side; and three others, Messrs. O. E. Macaulay, J. A. Lisboa and N. T. Nelson on the affirmative” (LO, 10 & 17 November 1888, 2).

<sup>133</sup> Usually only notices of the meetings appeared in the Lagos press. Notable exception is a report of the sixth anniversary of the Court “Fount of Hope” No. 7789 Ancient Order of Foresters. The event included a Church procession, sermon, refreshment and banquet (LS, 24 April 1895, 3).

attempt at categorisation should clarify the framework for this research.

### **3.3. Changes in Associational Life Reported in Lagos Newspapers between 1880 and 1920**

This section explores the changes in the character of associations reported in the Lagos newspapers. Firstly, the Lagos press came to use less space for recreational and literary associations. Notices of concerts, athletic games, lectures and debates appeared throughout 1880 to 1920; however, detailed reports of leisure activities, which were essential elements of three 1880s newspapers: the *Lagos Times and Gold Coast Colony Advertiser*, the *Eagle and Lagos Critic* and the *Lagos Observer*, gradually disappeared in the 1900s. Secondly, compared with newspapers of the 1880s, early twentieth century newspapers covered not only Lagos and its proximities, but also wider geographic areas, including inland areas of Nigeria, other British West African countries, Britain, America and sometimes other parts of Europe and Africa. The associations described in the Lagos newspapers also illustrate their geographical expansion, from the 1910s, toward inland Southern and Northern Nigeria. For instance, the Lagos press came to report the Onitsha Club, a recreational club formed by Europeans (LWR, 1 April 1911, 3) and Lokoja Traders' Association (LWR, 21 February 1920, 5) in Eastern Nigeria; the Kaduna Horticultural Society (NP, 4 October 1918, 11); and the Kano Mutual Aid Association (LWR, 13 March 1920, 6-8).

Religious associations in the Lagos press, especially the *Lagos Standard*, gradually included, not only reports of the associations relating to the CMS in Lagos, but also those of the United Native African Church in inland Lagos (LS, 1 December



1909, 6).<sup>134</sup> The arrival of the *Nigerian Chronicle* in 1908 provided an impetus for articles on Yoruba custom and religious associations.<sup>135</sup> In a rare case, Muslim associations, such as the Khillah Society of Ikorodu, which was inaugurated in 1890, were reported in the Lagos press,<sup>136</sup> and notice of a gymnastic event by the Muslim Athletic Sports Club appeared in the *Standard* (LS, 14 November 1906, 3).

There was also a slight change in the style of reporting of recreational associations' events during the period under consideration. In the late-nineteenth century, Lagos newspapers either placed a notice of such events or wrote glowing reports of the entertainments, rarely including a detailed critical review. However, in the early twentieth century, several review articles appeared in the pseudonym of "Play Goer" or "Stage Goer" in the *Lagos Standard*, the *Lagos Weekly Record* and the *Nigerian Chronicle*.<sup>137</sup> In addition, European plays were gradually replaced with Yoruba plays, which embodied incidents in the lives of local people and often attempted to incorporate a lesson on morality. For instance, the opera called "Mikado (Emperor of Japan)"<sup>138</sup> was performed by the "Lagos Glee Singers" in 1909 (LS, 1 December 1909, 6) and the same society performed a Yoruba play, on 2 May 1913, entitled "Awon Iwefa Mefa" at Glover Hall under the patronage of Prince Eleko, supported by the white-cap chiefs. The play was plotted on a mythical story current in Oyo, set in five acts, and the moral

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<sup>134</sup> The United Native African Church was established in 1891 by seceders from Protestant churches controlled by Europeans. For details on African Church see J. B. Webster, *African Churches among the Yoruba, 1888-1922* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1964).

<sup>135</sup> For instance, there was a series of articles on "Mythology and religion (Ifa) in Yoruba" in 1909.

<sup>136</sup> The Khillah Society was a mutual-help association for the Muslim elite that also existed "in Lagos, Abeokuta, and Jebu Ode" (NC, 16 October 1914, 5).

<sup>137</sup> For play review articles see for instance: LS, 23 August 1911, 5; 11 June 1913, 5; NC, 16 May 1913, 7; LWR, 30 October 1915, 3; 27 November 1915, 3.

<sup>138</sup> The *Mikado*, or *The Town of Titipu* was a comic opera, produced by W. S. Gilbert (libretto) and Arthur Sullivan (music) and first performed in London in 1885. This opera was said to be inspired by the Japanese Native Village exhibition in Knightsbridge between 1885 and 1887.

of the story portrayed “the triumph of wisdom over wickedness” (NC, 16 May 1913, 7).

Ethnic associations reported on in the 1880s by each Lagos newspaper differed, depending on the editors’ family connections and preferences—this can be seen in the *Observer*’s support for the Egba group, and the *Eagle*’s sympathy for the Yoruba (Oyo) society, discussed in Chapter 6. However, the influence of the editors’ tastes almost disappeared in the twentieth century newspapers. In addition, the Lagos newspapers occasionally referred to indigenous political organisations, such as the Ogboni Society (LWR, 11 October 1913, 3). At the end of the 1910s, we can see a geographical expansion of the political organisations mentioned in the Lagos press. The African Progress Union, founded in 1918 for the purpose of promoting “the social and economic welfare of the Africans of the world” (LS, 26 February 1919, 4; LWR, 14 February 1920, 2; Coleman 1958, 202), and the Universal Negro Improvement Association and African Communities’ League, which was the collaborative effort of the educated elite in British West Africa to form a united political organisation (LWR, 21 September 1920, 6), appeared in the newspapers.

The short-lived nineteenth century occupational associations were mainly either literary societies, such as in case of the Lagos Teachers’ Union (LO, 4 September 1886, 3);<sup>139</sup> or recreational associations, as can be seen in the case of the Mechanics Mutual Aid Provident and Improvement Association (E&LC, 28 July 1883, 4 etc) and the Carpenters’ Union Club (LS, 21 October 1896, 2). As discussed in Chapter 5, from the beginning of the twentieth century, the Lagos press frequently began to mention

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<sup>139</sup> The Lagos Teachers’ Union was inaugurated in 1886, “composed of all the teachers in the high and elementary schools in the colony” of Lagos. There were two objects of this union. The first is “The promotion of Yoruba literature, by seeking for and publishing original productions of the Yoruba people and by translating foreign works of interest into the Yoruba language,” and the second is “The promotion of school work, and the advantages of school teachers, and the furtherance of Education” (LO, 4 September 1886, 3).

vocations relating to agriculture and industry. At the end of 1910s, more formal trade unions were organised, such as the Nigeria Civil Service Union, established in August 1912 to promote the interests of African members of the Civil Service (LWR, 21 June 1913, 3) and the Nigerian Mechanics' Union, which was supported by Herbert Macaulay and carried out a railway strike (LWR, 31 January 1920, 3). At the end of the 1910s, detailed reports of indigenous trade unions, such as the Ajo Aiye (herbalist) Society, appeared in the newspaper (LS, 22 May 1918, 6).<sup>140</sup>

Memorial associations and associations relating to the British Empire will be examined in detail in Chapter 4 and Chapter 6 of this thesis.

### **3.4. Associational Life in the Contexts of Lagos Newspapers**

This section examines the contexts in which activities of voluntary associations tended to be reported in the Lagos newspapers. The Lagos press repeatedly discussed three main themes in connection with associational life in colonial Lagos—unity, progress and respectability. The Lagos newspapers reflected the educated elite's view of their mission to guide the illiterate section of the society. Activities in voluntary associations were described to be important for strengthening “unity”, which was essential for the “progress” of the society. Encouragement of associational life reported in the Lagos press could be viewed as a reflection of the mission of the educated elite as “respectable” members of the society.

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<sup>140</sup> The Ajo Aiye (herbalist) Society was inaugurated in August 1916 for the purpose of mutual help and mutual instructions among members. This society “consisted of respectable and recognised Native herbalists or doctors, locally known as Adaunses or Oniseguns, all of whom are Mohammedans” in Lagos (LS, 22 May 1918, 6).

### 3.4.1. Unity

“Unity is Strength” was a phrase frequently repeated in the Lagos press between 1880 and 1920. The kind of “unity” being promoted differed according to the time and situation—such as unity within Lagos, within Yorubaland until 1896, between Lagos and Southern Nigeria at the time of the amalgamation in 1906, between Southern and Northern Nigeria in 1914, with other British West African colonies, and among all British colonies at the time of WWI. Various issues, including associational activities, were described in connection with the subject of unity. The Lagos newspapers encouraged associational activities, emphasising that they would teach people how to co-operate each other, and as a result, would transcend social cleavage in Lagos and ethnic conflicts in Yorubaland. Some of the newspaper articles will be examined in this section.

As has been noted above, Lagos was a stratified society in which conflicts between several groups—such as Europeans, immigrants from Sierra Leone and Brazil, and indigenous people—continued from the mid-nineteenth century (Brown 1964). The educated elite in Lagos identified with various wider groups according to the context: African, British West African, Nigerian and Yoruba.<sup>141</sup> In addition, long-lasting conflicts between ethnic groups in the Lagos hinterland, “Yorubaland”, up until “pacification” by British intervention in 1892, caused mutual suspicion among the educated elite, whose places of origin differed (Omu 1978, 104-105). What is more, various other conflicts existed in Lagos: between Europeans (Colonial authority) and

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<sup>141</sup> The educated elite chose to unite with different groups according to each unique situation. For instance, J. A. Otonba Payne expressed sympathy both with the coastal elite in other parts of British West Africa, and at times with the interior people, Ijebu, with whom he had a family connection (Sawada 2005).

non-European populations; between *Saro* and indigenous people; between the traditional elite and the educated professional elite, such as lawyers and doctors (who had held high positions in the public sector until the Colonial Government required the traditional elite to supersede them); between Lagos residents and immigrants from Lagos hinterlands, Eastern and Northern Nigeria, other British colonies of Africa, or those from French colonies of West Africa;<sup>142</sup> among indigenous people in Lagos according to their origins; among the educated elite according to their denominations, political views and origins; and finally between Christians, Muslims and people with indigenous religions.

During the 1880s, the Lagos newspapers frequently lamented a paucity of “Union in one general interest, social sympathy, companionship, fellowship and company” between “distinct elements of society” in Lagos (E&LC, 28 July 1883, 2). In 1909, the *Nigerian Chronicle* discussed the reasons for a lamentable absence of unity in Lagos as follows: Firstly, “*We are selfish*”—the “native” of a certain position did not wish others outside his family to become eligible to adopt the same position; secondly, “*We harbour a feeling of prejudice one against the other without rhyme or reason*”; and thirdly, “*We lack sympathetic interest for one another.*” These characteristics of the “native” were said to be the “obstacle in the way of his own progress” in Lagos and a “weakness of

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<sup>142</sup> There were substantial numbers of “native foreigners” in Lagos. In 1911, immigrants from French colonies of West Africa consisted mostly of people from Dahomean (1,493 in total), while at the time of 1921 census, people from Togoland, Cameroons and Senegal joined this number, which amounted 2,588 in total. Immigrants from other British Empire counties—such as Sierra Leone, the Gold Coast, and West Indies—also increased from 1,632 in 1911 to 2,717 in 1921, and numbers of people from the Northern Province in Lagos increased from 6,404 in 1911 to 9,760 in 1921 (Talbot 1926, 22-24 & 180-81). Both in 1911 and 1921, around 20% of the total population of Lagos was categorised as “strangers”, that is, those who were neither of Popo nor Yoruba origin (ibid, 181). We can assume that there would have been discrimination or conflict between the old residents of Lagos and those who immigrated there later. For instance, as will be mentioned in Chapter 6, there were complaints about including the “Procession of Kroo men” in the programme of Queen Victoria’s Golden Jubilee celebration in Lagos because Kroo men (who came from Liberia) were not “Native Yoruba” therefore, they would not “express our loyalty” (LS, 9 June 1897, 3).

our race” (NC, 2 April 1909, 4-6).<sup>143</sup> A report on Henry Carr’s speech at a dinner on 16 November 1920, held by the Acting Lieutenant Governor of Southern Nigeria, repeated the same lamentation. His speech mentioned the lack of unity among the educated elite in the society: “What shall we do to check the regrettable tendency to divisions, opposition and antagonisms especially among the educated class upon whose solidarity the progress and advancement of the community so largely depends?” (NP, 3 December 1920, 26-27).

In addition, it is noteworthy that the Lagos press was concerned both about the absence of “public spirit” or “public”, and the lack of “unity” in Lagos.<sup>144</sup> As Chapters 4 to 6 of this thesis will show, the Lagos press encouraged various associational activities, emphasising that they were for the good of the public and would help people to understand the idea of “public-spiritedness”, which would eventually establish unity in Lagos.

The Lagos press emphasised that united actions in associations were essential for unity in the society. The associational activities were described as a means of concealing various difficulties that the educated elite inevitably confronted, such as frictions among themselves and with other groups and ethnic conflicts in Yorubaland. Despite the fact that the distinction between several elements of society was rigid, it was reported that the educated elite had a sense of unity and stability through associational activity. In the nineteenth century, religious and recreational associations provided “comradeship” and group cohesion among the educated elite, as well as cultural and intellectual ties with Europeans, although not all the activities succeeded. Numerous recreational associations

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<sup>143</sup> In this thesis the italic fonts inside quotations were inserted according to original text and not by the author.

<sup>144</sup> For instance, see the editorial of the *Lagos Weekly Record*, titled “Wanted Public Sprit and Unity” (LWR, 23 September 1911, 4).

were under the patronage of the Governor of Lagos, and these activities were represented as an example of an amicable relationship between “the gentlemen both European and native” or “the aristocracy of Lagos, both European and native” (E&LC, 27 June & 11 July 1885, 2-3). From the early twentieth century onwards, however, racial discrimination towards the African educated elite in Lagos gradually became more apparent, and this strengthened the ties between Africans in the educated elite class and semi-educated class as well as in some cases with the illiterate mass, which became more frequently referred to as one unified “indigenous society”. This change influenced the way associational activities were described in the Lagos newspapers.

As early as 1883, the *Lagos Times* published an editorial titled “Combination for Action a want in Lagos” urging the establishment of “a sound and thoroughly patriotic organization” like the one the people in Sierra Leone already had (LT, 14 February 1883, 2). In an editorial in the *Standard* in 1902, “A Felt Want ‘Union is Strength’”, discussed the importance of literary societies, trade associations and friendly societies for the progress of society:

A saying “Union is strength” is an admitted truism. The soundness of the moral contained in the allegorical bundle of sticks has been well tested by practical experience not only in the family circle, but in society, business and the affairs of life in general... Much of the **progress** that is found in **civilized** countries is due to the spirit of union that exists among the people (LS, 27 August 1902, 2).<sup>145</sup>

The Lagos press was conscious of the position of Lagos in the world, and often compared its level of unity with other British Colonies in West Africa. The column of “Weekly Notes” in the *Record* in 1902 discussed the necessity for “a Native society,

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<sup>145</sup> In this thesis, all bold fonts in the quotations of the Lagos newspapers were inserted by author.

embodying all the elements and interests of the native” and mentioned: “In this the Gold Coast is ahead of us and has sent us an example which needs to be emulated” (LWR, 25 October 1902, 3). In 1908, the editorial of the *Standard*, titled “An Urgent Need”, mentioned a Traders’ Association in Sierra Leone (LS, 12 August 1908, 5-6), and the *Standard* also gave Japan as a notable example for Lagos to follow in an article titled “Force of Unity” (LS, 28 August 1907, 4-5).

In 1907, the *Standard* explained the distinction between “union” and “unity” and suggested that the latter was “the cardinal want of the Native”. Though there were some “Friendly and Secret Societies...the Dancing and other social Clubs and Unions”, the lack of unity was apparent in Lagos. This had already been achieved, not only by “more advanced communities, in Europe and America”, but also by indigenous people in Yorubaland:

In this respect, the educated Native is considerably behind his illiterate brother in the interior, and would do well to take a leaf out of the book of the latter, who is sufficiently alive to his own interest as to have his Boards of Trade to regulate his commercial affairs, as in the case of the *Parakoyis* of Abeokuta, whose trade regulations were published and commented upon in a leading article in a recent issue of this paper (LS, 27 November 1907, 4-5).

This discourse pattern—referring not only to Europeans but also to indigenous non-elite people as a model they should follow—was repeated when the Lagos press described associational life.

The idea of “Unity is Strength” was culminated in Lagos in 1908 with the establishment of the United Native Progress Society, which was composed of Christians,



Muslims, Brazilians and indigenous people (LS, 17 Aug 1910, 5-6).<sup>146</sup> This society was an interesting example of early united action beyond ethnic and political differences with the aim of establishing its own public hall “for the native by the native”. At the ceremony for the laying of the foundation stone of a hall named, “Illu Pesi Enu Owa”, in August 1910, the vice president, J. W. Vaughan, in a speech, mentioned the origin of the name of the society:

We all may not have studied closely the full import of the name of the Society—“United Native Progressive”—“Unity is strength”; and, Unity being represented foremost in the name of the Society, I feel sure that it is on this idea that the members are basing their endeavours, “Progressive” –**having united in one, we are sure to progress** and these two names combined together here are sure to lend the Society to a grand future (LS, 17 August 1910, 5-6).

At the opening ceremony of Illupesi Hall in December 1911, it was emphasised that the building was erected without European donations. The absence of a hall for people to gather represented the backwardness and lack of unity of the society. Therefore, the opening of the hall was described as praiseworthy (LWR, 23 December 1911, 4-5).

As we have seen, associational activity encouraged unity, which was considered essential for the progress of society. Descriptions of associational activity in the Lagos newspapers examined in this research can be considered to represent the quest by the educated elite for solidarity amongst themselves and with other groups that existed in Lagos society. It is important to note, however, that this encouragement of unity was, at times, for the purpose of securing their own economic interests, as will be seen in Chapter 6 using, as an example, a case in Yorubaland.

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<sup>146</sup> Dr. Obasa, J. W. Vaughan and J. B. Olukolu acted as President, vice-President, and Secretary of the society respectively.

There was no such thing as one united society in Lagos, but there was a desire to encourage the construction of one society, which was expressed in newspapers. In this part, I have examined how unity was discussed in relation to associational life in general. The following chapters will provide detailed considerations of each type of association. Memorial associations were regarded as a means of providing a common memory to the educated elite whose places of origin and interests differed. Industrial and agricultural associations occasionally contributed to bridging the social gap between the educated elite and the indigenous people, with some exceptions, which were composed only of the non-elite, like the Butchers' Society. Temporary associations relating to British public ceremonies, such as some Jubilee Committees, gave the educated elite participants a sense of solidarity by using the imagined nostalgic unity of the British Empire.<sup>147</sup>

As noted in footnote 116, the term “civil society” has been discussed from various perspectives, and this concept would create resonance for several situations discussed in this thesis. However, the term is normally used to indicate aversion to the state, focusing on the way in which the state maintains hegemony over society and how civil society influences democratisation process. Concern with the operation of the state is not the main focus of this thesis. Therefore, it would be misleading to use the term “civil society” in this thesis. During the period of this research in particular, the state (the Colonial authority) was not a coherent entity, but a rather patchy, inconsistent, and sometimes unsuccessful organisation. In addition, “civil society” is not the contemporary term between 1880 and 1920 in the Lagos newspapers. As this research

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<sup>147</sup> The word “nostalgic” would need an explanation. The educated elite who had received a Western education and an English lifestyle often had a shared memory of the British Empire. Even temporally, at the celebration of the British Empire, they perceived themselves as a part of the British colonies (discussed in Chapter 6) and they could recall the British Empire in a nostalgic way as one of the origins of their culture and knowledge.

focuses on the vocabulary and discourse used by the educated elite in colonial Lagos, it will not explore in detail the Lagos press and associational life of the educated elite in connection with the concept of civil society.

Nevertheless, the concepts of citizenship, the public and the nation were developing in the period of this research. As Chapters 4, 5 and 6 will demonstrate, memorial campaigns were encouraged to celebrate the “public goodness” of those men and women who were seen to represent the society to which many members of the elite aspired; the establishment of industrial institutes by individual bequests were described to have come out of “public-spiritedness” rarely found in Lagos; and newspaper articles on the celebrations of the British Empire and the fund raising societies during WWI repeated the term “citizen of the British Empire”. Associations and the press in Lagos could provide an arena (between the Colonial Government and private households) in which the educated elite of different ethnic, religious, educational, economic and political backgrounds could come together and discuss issues of concern, and sometimes work together to achieve certain aims. Between 1880 and 1920, they had just begun to “function as a seedbed of nascent civil society” (Barber 2006, 13).

#### 3.4.2. Progress

When we examine the descriptions of associational life in the Lagos press another key word is “progress” or “civilisation”. The educated elite in Lagos had been searching for a modernisation that was deemed suitable for Africans; that is to say, “real national progress” without losing respect and dignity for their own culture. A series of debates, concerning how Lagos society should develop, had appeared in the Lagos newspapers. The articles on associational life were no exception.

The notion of “progress” in colonial Lagos, and later in Nigeria, has attracted attention in historiography. It has been argued that, from the beginning of the twentieth century, the educated elite, who were often the product of Western education by Christian missionaries, gradually changed their attitude from “Black Englishmen” to cultural nationalists. The influences of Black Atlantic intellectual networks, as well as growing opposition to British colonialism and racism, became the incentive for the educated elite to begin searching for their own style of progress (Echeruo 1977; Zachernuk 1991; 2000, 56-62). The notion of the “African personality”, as defined by Americo-Liberian writer and diplomat, Edward Wilmot Blyden (1832-1912), impacted strongly on the idea of progress in the British colonies of West Africa. Instead of the Social Darwinian notion of progress that assumed every race was placed in different stages in the “ladder of civilisation” (African at the lower end and the Anglo-Saxon in the superior position), Blyden identified different forms of civilisation according to the characteristics of each race.<sup>148</sup> In addition to these two aspects, Japan’s victory in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905 served as an essential source of inspiration for the debate on Africans’ “own way of progress” (discussed in Chapter 2 and Chapter 6). This change of focus became the stimulus for the encouragement, by the educated elite, of the rehabilitation of traditional customs and religions.

The Lagos newspapers began to publish articles criticising the “hybrid” character of the “civilised” and “Westernised native”, chastising the imitation and assimilation of Western values.<sup>149</sup> A notable example is the editorial titled “European Civilization and

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<sup>148</sup> See Chapter 4 and Chapter 6 for more discussions on Edward W. Blyden and the debates on African way of progress.

<sup>149</sup> A series of articles criticising the Western educated elite was published between 1904 to 1910. Other examples are as follows: “A Drawback to the Progress of the Native African as a Race” (LS, 15 April 1903); “Clash of Cultures” (LWR, 27 August 1904); “Is the Civilised Native Mad?” (LWR, 16 May 1908, 4); “Equivocal Position of Educated Native” (LWR, 4 April 1908, 3); “The Despair of the Civilised Native” (LWR, 25 April 1908, 4).

the West African Native” in the *Record*, dated 21 May 1904, which pointed out that the uneducated indigenous people were higher in morals than the “civilized” educated elite, who had “been deprived of all self-independence, manliness and self respect”. Europeanised and “civilised” lifestyle such as dress, habit and food was argued to shorten people’s life span because it was “unnatural” and unsuitable for the West African climate or environment (LS, 7 July 1909, 4). The brevity of life of the educated (or Europeanised) “native” had been the subject of repeated comment in the local press (LS, 7 February 1912, 4; 13 August 1913, 4). The educated elite in Lagos, with this self-critical attitude, were described as “uncertain Victorians” (Echeruo 1977; Zachernuk 2000).

In addition to the oft-mentioned rehabilitation of indigenous religions and customs, and the physical improvements,—such as the construction of infrastructure and sanitary conditions of the colony, as part of this research, I have attempted to identify other elements constituting Africans’ “own way of progress”.

Firstly, the establishment of associations was reported to be not the only requirement considered necessary for the unity of the society, but also for the progress of society in an African way. Secondly, literacy in English (and in vernacular languages) was considered essential for the progress of society as it allowed access to commercial opportunities and “white-collar” occupations (Newell 2002).<sup>150</sup> The literary society was also described as a “desideratum” for the progress of society because it would not only raise the educational levels of people, but would also provide the incentive for them to

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<sup>150</sup> Bersselaar (2005) examines how interactions between Igbo “sons abroad” and Igbo hometown associations that existed from 1925, had appropriated the coloniser’s notions, such as “progress” and “self-help”, for their own needs. It argues that urban migrants and Igbo both abroad and in the hometown associations, frequently referred to the terms “development”, “progress”, “literacy” and “education”, attempting to establish and retain their influence on villages, and as a result, “reimagined” Igbo villages.

unite as one people through discussion of issues of concern. A letter, in the pseudonym “Amicus”, to the *Record* in 1893, lamented that a “community without literary and social institutions” led “a miserable existence” because:

it is deprived of that incentive to **unity** which is essentially necessary to render it [the community] strong and its opinion irresistible. [Through activities in literary and social institutions] Many social evils are corrected, good principles initiated and imbibed when thoughts and ideas are interchanged and suggestions given and received at social gatherings and the community is thereby improved in tone, in enlightenment and in views (LWR, 4 November 1893, 3).

This suggests that literacy was recognised as an essential for the unity of a community, because it would provide an arena for discussion and encourage the community to consider itself as one that would eventually improve society. Here, it seems that literacy is closely related to the emergence of the idea of a “public”.

In the 1899 editorial titled, “The Decay of Intellectual Culture”, the *Standard* emphasised the importance of the literary and scientific societies and wrote:

For a community which boasts the progress that Lagos has made within recent years, it is a sad reflection and one which does not speak very hopefully for the future, to notice the entire absence of any organized efforts for self-improvement among the youth of the colony (LS, 11 January 1899, 2-3).

In the following chapters, I would like to explore the other elements considered essential for achieving Africans’ “own way of progress” for the future of the society.

### 3.4.3. Respectability

“Respectability” is the coinage of late eighteenth century Britain, whose definition was: “The state, quality, or condition of being respectable in point of character or social standing”.<sup>151</sup> In early colonial Africa, “respectability” was adopted and understood as “the possession of sufficient freedom, resources, knowledge and seriousness of mind to adopt the dominant European lifestyle” (Iliffe 2005, 246). This concept of “Respectability”, which was adopted from the middle class ideology in Victorian England, formed the basis of elite identity in colonial Lagos (Cole 1975, 48). The encouragement of unity and progress through associational activities was recognised as the “mission of the elite”, which was the “respectable” thing to do.<sup>152</sup> As Table 8 shows, the term “respectability” and “respectable” did not appear frequently compared with the terms “unity” and “progress” (concepts discussed in the previous sections). In addition, Table 9 on the contents analysis of the *Record* shows a gradual decrease in frequency of use of the words “respectability” and “respectable” in the Lagos newspapers between 1891 and 1921. Nevertheless, these are useful terms to consider when we examine associational life in colonial Lagos.

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<sup>151</sup> The first citation of “respectability” in the Oxford English Dictionary (Second Edition 1989) dated in 1875. A sentence from the *Modern Times* wrote: “He is very sensible that there are in all classes of life, men of honour and respectability”.

<sup>152</sup> The term “respectable” has a longer history than “respectability”. As early as the sixteenth century, it was used in the meaning of things or persons, “Worthy or deserving of respect by reason of some inherent quality or qualities”. In the mid-eighteenth century, the word begins to be used to describe a person’s attributes, especially “of good or fair social standing, and having the moral qualities” (Oxford English Dictionary, Second Edition, 1989).

**Table 8: The Numbers of the Terms “Progress”, “Unity”, “Respectability” and “Respectable” in the Lagos Newspapers**

	Lagos Observer 1882-1888	Lagos Weekly Record 1891-1921 (except for 1913-15)	Lagos Standard 1907-1920	Nigerian Pioneer 1914-1922
Progress	100	1720	769	1009
Unity	20	232	157	92
Respectable	60	157	44	22
Respectability	7	25	14	1

[Source: World Newspaper Archive, African Newspapers Collection. Contents analysis carried out by the author]

**Table 9: Decline in the Frequency of the Terms “Respectability” and “Respectable”**

Lagos Weekly Record (1891-1921 except for 1913-15)	Respectability	Respectable
1891-1899	14	78
1900-1909	5	45
1911-1921 (except for 1913-15)	6	34
Total	<b>25</b>	<b>157</b>

[Source: World Newspaper Archive, African Newspapers Collection. Contents analysis carried out by the author]

In the Lagos newspapers between 1880 and 1920, the term “respectable” was used mostly as an adjective to describe the educated African elite. For instance, in 1887, the assembly for a grand evening ball by the Athletic Sports’ Club was reported to be “composed of a large number of **respectable** Europeans and natives” (LO, 6 & 27 August 1887, 2). The word also functioned as a noun, interchangeable with “elite”. A notice of a debate by the Young Men’s Christian Association on the introduction of the English custom of marriage mentioned “most of our ‘**respectables**’ are expected to take



part” (LO, 25 February 1888, 4). The term “respectability” appeared in the advertisements of the luxurious adornments and dresses imported from Europe and in the articles that illustrated character or appearance of prominent persons of the society. For instance, Ashoton Kinder & Co. of Manchester inserted a notice seeking “Merchants or gentlemen of good standing and **respectability** in Lagos” (LWR, 31 Aug 1895, 1). From the end of the nineteenth century, these terms are found to have been used in a negative context. Yoruba farmers, seeking profitable enterprise and initiating slave trading, were mocked as the men who “discovered short cuts to fame, and royal roads to prosperity and **respectability**” (LS, 16 November 1898, 3), and the *Record* criticised the “civilized native” and mentioned: “In no aspect of his supposedly enlightened order of life does he find anything that gives promise of hope for the future, while its social order represents but a medley of sham, pretence and ludicrous travesty, cloaked under a sort of **respectability** which is as hollow as is the social order to which it belongs” (LWR, 25 April 1908, 4).

“Respectability” has featured far more in discussions of British history. However, recently, in the field of South African history, there is a growing interest in the concept of respectability, especially relating to gender history (Ross 1999; Thomas 2006). Ross (1999) examines the respectability and gentility of the African elite in the Cape Colony (South Africa), and argues that “Respectability and gentility were manifested most clearly in material things”, such as housing, clothing and education. The early definition of “respectability” in Lagos also put emphasis on a person’s descent, as well as material accomplishments, such as dress and dwelling (*Anglo-African*, 12 September 1863, 2).

There is a consensus in historians’ debates on the “content and function of respectability” in that “to be respectable was the same as appearing respectable” (Cordery 1995, 37). In order to maintain the “respectable” life, which corresponded

with the Victorian lifestyle in Britain, “native gentlemen” had to obtain an education and financial stability.

Associational activities functioned as an embodiment of “respectability” among the educated elite, especially in nineteenth century Lagos. For instance, involvement in religious and literary societies was recognised as a “respectable” and “worthy” use of spare time. The temperance movement was encouraged, although it was beset with difficulties in the realisation of its aim. One example was the Independent Order of Good Templars, and several other similar organisations experienced similar problems. Concerts and sports were a common pastime for the educated elite.<sup>153</sup> They enjoyed choruses, musicals and plays by the Breadfruit School Entertainment Society, the Melodramatic Society and the Ladies’ Social Club, although some lamented the poor quality of performances compared with those of Europe.<sup>154</sup> In addition, some of the educated elite emphasised their membership of associations in Britain—such as the Royal Geographical Society, the Royal Colonial Institute, the Victoria Institute, and the Philosophical Society of Great Britain—as proof of their “elite status” or as evidence of membership of intellectual circles, not only in Lagos, but worldwide (Payne 1883, 142; E&LC, 27 June & 11 July 1885, 3).

However, “respectability” in colonial Lagos seems to have differed slightly from that of the Victorian middle class in England. It meant not only one’s material accomplishments and the adaptation of the European lifestyle, but also the responsibility of the educated elite to guide the younger generation, and the semi-educated and illiterate people, for the future benefit of their society. The educated

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<sup>153</sup> See Appendix 9 for a photograph of elite African audiences for a tennis match in 1888.

<sup>154</sup> There was an article in the Lagos Standard with the pseudonym, “Playgoer”, criticising the quality of Shakespeare’s *Merchant of Venice*, performed at the Glover Hall in Lagos, as inferior to that of Europe. However, the *Nigerian Chronicle* defended the performance (NC, 30 June 1911, 7).

elite's consciousness of mission was the basis of their movement for protecting the vernacular or the indigenous culture and for criticising the lack of originality and mimicry of European culture (LO, 8 January 1885; 2 & 16 April 1887). Christianity was not necessarily a criterion for "respectable" persons. In 1918, successful Muslim herbalists, who were members of the Ajo Aiye (herbalist) Society, were described as "respectable" (LS, 22 May 1918, 6). Blue collar occupations, such as farmers and artisans, were also called "respectable" from the early twentieth century. What is more, in the early twentieth century, the term "self-respect" and "economic independence" replaced the word "respectability". Interestingly, the Lagos newspapers described "native plays" using vocabulary similar to that found in the articles on "agriculture", such as "natural" and "self-respect" (discussed in Chapter 5).

### **3.5. Conclusion**

As discussed, of the seven categories of voluntary associations in 1880-1920 Lagos, there has been some research on the first four types—religious, recreational, literary, and political. Therefore, Chapter 4 to Chapter 6 of this thesis will examine the remaining three types of voluntary associations—memorial, occupational, and associations relating to the British Empire. An examination of these three types of association, reported in the Lagos newspapers, will elucidate the way in which the local educated elite interpreted and utilised the notion of unity and progress for the future of their society, rather than merely adopting Western notions of race, civilisation, and Christian morality. It also enables us to trace relatively secular aspects of the educated elite in colonial Lagos.

In this thesis, the associational lives described in the Lagos newspapers are

perceived as the self-representation by the educated elite of their society, and also as the project of constructing their own future society. By establishing voluntary associations and reporting their activities in the newspapers, referring to “progress” and “unity,” the educated elite were discussing how their society should be and how their society should develop.

## CHAPTER 4

### MEMORIALISATION: CONSTRUCTION OF HISTORY BY VISUALISING CHARISMATIC FIGURES

#### 4.1. Introduction

##### 4.1.1. Theories of Memorialisation

The term “memory” has been a prominent feature of scholarly discourse, not only in the sociological, but also in the historical field. What Jay Winter (2006) called the “memory boom” in the Western academia initiated a proliferation of terms and concepts relating to memory studies—collective memory, cultural memory, historical memory, local memory, official memory, popular memory, public memory, social memory, embodied memory,<sup>155</sup> as well as heritage, myth and traditions.<sup>156</sup> Scholars discuss memory, commemoration, and history in various contexts, such as the construction of national identity and regional loyalty, consumer promotions, popular culture, trauma of war, as well as reparations and apologies in domestic and international politics. This continuing

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<sup>155</sup> The act of remembering takes corporeal form, that is to say, memory is embodied. This approach toward memory is notably discussed by Paul Connerton. In *How Societies Remember* (1989), Connerton seeks to answer the question of how the collective memory of groups is produced and sustained. He distinguishes three types of memory: personal, cognitive, and habit, and puts emphasis on the third category, habit memory—rituals and bodily practices. According to him, the body is a main “container” of habit memory because the past is passed on to people in bodily practices (see also chapter 4 of Miształ 2003).

<sup>156</sup> Some scholars “stick with one of these terms or draw distinctions among two or more of them, while others regard them as more or less interchangeable” (Climo and Cattell 2002, 4). For instance, Miształ (2003) explains collective memory and social memory by one definition (158), while Fentress and Wickham (1992) stress their use of social memory rather than collective memory because the latter would imply full justification for “the collective side of one’s conscious life” and it “does not render the individual a sort of automaton, passively obeying the interiorized collective will” (iv).

academic interest in memory can be traced back to the sociologist, Maurice Halbwachs (1877-1945), who published *Les cadres sociaux de la mémoire* (The Social Frameworks of Memory) in 1925.<sup>157</sup> His posthumous work published in 1950, *La mémoire collective* (*The Collective Memory*, English translation published in 1980), became a classic in the field of collective memory. Halbwachs considered memory to be the product of social groups, and argued that what individuals remember is determined by their group membership, although this takes place in their own minds (Halbwachs 1980, 48). He was the first sociologist to stress that “our conceptions of the past” are influenced by mental images of the present, namely, “collective memory is a reconstruction of the past in the light of the present” (Halbwachs 1992, 34). His emphasis on “consensus and cohesion” in the memory of certain communities was criticised for disregarding “conflict and dissent within the community” (Burke 1989, 106-107),<sup>158</sup> however, this notion of collective memory still remains influential.

## History and Memory

In the earlier historiography of memory, both Maurice Halbwachs and Pierre Nora assume a fundamental split between history and memory. Halbwachs distinguishes autobiographical memory, collective memory and historical memory. In Halbwachs’

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<sup>157</sup> *On collective memory* (1992) listed in the bibliography of this thesis is an English translation of two works of Halbwachs, *Les cadres sociaux de la mémoire* [*The Social Frameworks of Memory*] (1925) and *La Topographie légendaire des évangiles en terre sainte* [*Legendary Topography of the Holy Land*] (1941).

<sup>158</sup> It would be useful to cite the following extract from Burke (1989): “Given the multiplicity of social identities, and the coexistence of rival memories, alternative memories (family memories, local memories, class memories, national memories, and so on), it is surely more fruitful to think in pluralistic terms about the uses of memories to different social groups, who may well have different views about what is significant or ‘worthy of memory’” (Burke 1989, 107).

view, autobiographical (individual) memory is personal experience that tends to fade with time unless it is periodically reinforced. Historical memory is the “dead” past known only through historical records and can be kept alive through commemorations and festive occasions (Halbwachs 1992, 23-24). Collective memory is located in the zone of interaction between individual remembrances and the reference points from the memories of others and historical records (ibid 1980, 59). History is objective and impartial scholarship, whereas memories of the past are constructed by communities (ibid, 80). The French historian, Pierre Nora, also claims memory and history are two different orientations towards the past. Memory is “life” remaining “in permanent evolution, open to the dialectic of remembering and forgetting”, whereas history is “the reconstruction... of what is no longer”, that relies upon authentic historical evidence (1989, 8). However, this split between history and memory has been challenged, and a more fluid transition between memory and history proposed instead. Burke (1989) refers to history as social memory, a convenient piece of shorthand that sums up the rather complex process of selection and interpretation (99). History and memory are complementary. History and memory interact and shape each other in extremely complex ways, as different versions of the past are constructed and reconstructed, modified, and invented. This chapter concurs with the idea that both history and memory are constantly reconstructed according to the needs of the present.

### Mediums of Social Memory

Memorialisation takes various forms. There are materialised forms of memory—such as historical writings, literature, monuments and souvenirs—and immaterial forms of memory—such as oral traditions, bodily practices, habits and

customs. According to Burke (1989), there are five categories for media of social memory. The first is “Oral traditions”.<sup>159</sup> The second is “Memoirs and other written records”. The third is “Images”, both pictorial and photographic, still and moving. The fourth is “Actions”, such as rituals of commemorations, for example, Memorial Day. “These rituals are re-enactments of the past, acts of memory, but they are also attempts to impose interpretations of the past, to shape memory”. The fifth is “Space”. Burke concurs with Maurice Halbwachs’ point of view about “the value of ‘placing’ images that one wishes to remember in particular locations, such as memory palaces or memory theatres” (100).

#### “Invention of Tradition” and Popular Memory Approach

In the 1980s, Eric Hobsbawm pointed out that the late nineteenth century in Europe was an age of “invention of tradition”, an age of a search for national tradition, with the aim of “legitimizing” the existence of the nation-state. By propagating fictional pasts and a sense of their institutions’ ancientness, and constructing national monuments and rituals, people invented “national tradition” (Hobsbawm and Ranger, 1983). The growing opposition to the “invention of tradition” perspective, which often put emphasis on “memory and commemoration as sources of support for the exercise of power and authority, and instruments of élite manipulation used to control lower-class and minority groups” (Misztal 2003, 61), resulted in the emergence of the popular memory approach, which professed a less deterministic “bottom up memory” (ibid, 61-72).<sup>160</sup> In African studies, “memory” is often discussed from sociological or

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<sup>159</sup> For a brief discussion on oral culture and memory, see chapter 2 of Misztal (2003).

<sup>160</sup> Popular memory approach applied Michel Foucault’s theory and analysed the force of



anthropological perspectives, focusing attention on the role of various memorialisations in the formation of a national or regional identity, or construction/reconstruction of customs and practices.<sup>161</sup>

#### 4.1.2. Memorialisation in South Western Nigeria

In this part, I would like to consider forms of memorialisation in south western Nigeria, applying Peter Burke's categorization on media of social memory.

Regarding the first type of social memory, i.e. oral tradition,<sup>162</sup> the custom of honouring ancestors and prominent figures of society through praise poetry (*oriki*) has been seen in Yorubaland, south western Nigeria. *Oriki* are not an account of the past, however, with the aid of *itan* (historical narrative), the recitation of *oriki* transmit memories of particular towns, lineages and individuals (Barber 1990; Iliffe 2005). In south western Nigeria, print culture was not preceded by manuscript culture as in

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memory that could challenge dominant discourse, with terms such as “counter-memory”, “unofficial memory” and “oppositional memory”. The earliest investigation was carried out by the Popular Memory Group at the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, University of Birmingham, in 1982, utilising the methodology of oral history (Misztal 2003, 61-67).

<sup>161</sup> It is beyond the scope of this study to discuss extensively the research on memory in African studies. According to Cole (2005), there are three important trends in researches on collective memory in Africa. The first is research which uses oral tradition as a veridical source to reconstruct the past. The second is those focused on “national commemoration, and the contested commemoration—or erasure—of past state violence”. The third is research “about the role of religious practice... in shaping people's relationships to the past” (3-4). Debates on memory and the production of history in Africa have paralleled the growing interest shown by anthropologists to the dynamics of remembering and forgetting in contemporary African society. For instance, see the works of Shaw (2002).

<sup>162</sup> Until the 1960s, oral traditions (often based on memories) were not considered to be an “authentic” source of history by positivist historians, given that they tended to be continuously altered. However, with the methodological developments for examining the veracity of oral traditions—which were the result of research by Africanist Jan Vansina from the University of Wisconsin at Madison—oral data was legitimised as an essential and authentic source of history. Recourse to oral tradition is not specific to African historiography, however, these are particularly given importance because “Africans tell, sing, produce (through dance, recitation, marionette puppets), sculpt, and paint their history”, as well as inscribing their history (Jewsiewicki and Mudimbe 1993, 3).

Europe. The technique of writing and printing was introduced by Christian missionaries in the 1850s to the areas with rich oral traditions (Barber 2007, 143-44). The practices of memorialisation relied on oral traditions, such as ritualistic chants repeated at performances. Though this chapter will not discuss this in detail, the Lagos educated elite had a sense of mission and patriotic zeal for preserving Yoruba oral traditions in text, and utilised oral traditions and written materials as historical sources. The bilingual Yoruba educated elite—such as J. O. George (1847-1915), E. M. Lijadu (1862-1926), Rev. Samuel Johnson, and John Otonba Payne—retrieved information from oral traditions when they wrote on local history, religion, customs and literature.<sup>163</sup> Some editors of Lagos newspapers transcribed Yoruba oral tradition into text, such as the advertisements of Yoruba books and through ethnographical descriptions of Yoruba religions and customs that appeared in the *Nigerian Chronicle*.<sup>164</sup>

Regarding the second category, written records, publication began with the arrival of the CMS missionaries in the 1840s in south western Nigeria. Historical writings, newspapers, and novels and poems functioned as a medium of social memory in colonial Lagos by disseminating certain narratives and knowledge to readers. Publication of historical writings by the educated elite began in 1843, when Samuel Ajayi Crowther published a study of the Yoruba language, titled, *A Vocabulary of the Yoruba Language*, two sections of which were devoted to historical matters (Law 1976, 71). J. A. O. Payne (1839-1906) published *Payne's Lagos and West African Almanack*

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<sup>163</sup> For instance, Mojola Agbebi (D. B. Vincent)'s *Iwe Alo*, a collection of Yoruba riddles (1885), Payne's *Table of Principal Events in Yoruba History* (1893), J. O. George's *Historical Notes on the Yoruba Country and Its Tribes* (1897), E. M. Lijadu's *Ifa* (1897), James Johnson's *Yoruba Heathenism* (1899), and Samuel Johnson's, *History of the Yorubas* (1921) utilised oral traditions as source. Yet many of the early educated Yoruba were sceptical of the value of oral traditions as "authentic" historical evidence (Law 1976, 78-80).

<sup>164</sup> This is notable in the 1920s Yoruba-English bilingual newspapers that served as an "archive" of oral tradition (Barber 2009a, 3-4).

and *Diary* from 1874, continuing for more than 20 years, and endeavoured, during that time, to describe the actual conditions in British West Africa.<sup>165</sup>

We can also see poems published in pamphlets in memory of the poets who wrote them.<sup>166</sup> In 1886, E. M. Lijadu published a small book, *Kekere Iwe Orin Aribiloso*, which was sold for 7 pence and consisted of a collection of poems by Aribiloso, a satirical poet of Abeokuta. According to the *Eagle and Lagos Critic*, Aribiloso's poems were "said to have flourished about a couple of centuries ago, at Abeokuta, whose proverbs and witty sayings, have secured for him a lasting memorial at the hands of the chiefs and principal orators of his native land". The book contains not only the series of oral poems by Aribiloso, but also memoirs of his life, showing how each poem arose from specific circumstances.<sup>167</sup> The editor praised Lijadu's "noble effort" of "Preserving as far as possible in a lasting form the wisdom and Knowledge of those reckoned with the past" and said:

the wit and humorous sayings of Aribiloso might have been allowed to go buried in the limbo of forgetfulness and lost to the cravings of posterity, sunk in the unfathomable abyss of the past, but for the well-directed efforts recently put forth by Mr. E. M. Lijadu a tutor in the C.M.S. Lagos Collegiate Institute by whom the above interesting work has been compiled (E&LC, 9 & 23 October 1886, 4).

The act of inscribing particular events in newspapers also fits this category. The newspapers were, simultaneously, the ephemeral mode of composition, "one-day

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<sup>165</sup> For bibliographical information on early historical writings in south western Nigeria, see Law (1976).

<sup>166</sup> The book of poems by Aribiloso, compiled by E. M. Lijadu, is one of the instances in which the first and second types of preserving memories—oral traditions and written records—interconnected with each other, because the poems were first retrieved from oral tradition and crystallised into written form.

<sup>167</sup> Therefore, the poems "carry" their historical context with them, evoking circumstances that are not made explicit in the song-texts themselves. I am indebted to Professor Karin Barber for this point.

best-seller” (Anderson [1983] 1991, 35), which disseminated emergent events, like a notice board, and the organ for giving permanent form to events as the recorders of local history and, occasionally, those of oral history as well. In colonial Lagos, the educated elite often preserved newspapers for a relatively long time in their personal libraries.<sup>168</sup> This indicates that newspapers were treated like today’s books and pamphlets.

Regarding the third type, “image”, regardless of whether they are pictorial or photographic, still or moving, memorial portraits of important figures in Lagos fits this type. Although there is no record of statues being built in Lagos between 1880 and 1920 in memory of great men, the idea of erecting such statues was certainly alive. In addition, the popular art depicting prominent figures and celebrity advertisements in the Nigerian press today belong to this category.<sup>169</sup> Between 1880 and 1920 the Lagos newspapers rarely had illustrations other than advertisements; however, as has been discussed, in 1895, the *Lagos Standard* inaugurated a “Portrait Gallery” for reviewing worthy individuals who had “been most prominent in the development of the resources of the country, and in the true advancement and material progress of its inhabitants” (18 September 1895).<sup>170</sup>

Acts of commemoration, the fourth category, have various forms, such as masquerades, “native dance”, the memorial campaigns of the educated elite, and in a rare case, celebrating Memorial Day like Agbebi Day. Attending memorial meetings,

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<sup>168</sup> For instance, John Otonba Payne’s family preserved nineteenth century newspapers up to the 1960s (Kopytoff 1964, 304).

<sup>169</sup> See for instance, Karin Barber, “Popular Arts in Africa,” *African Studies Review* 30, 3 (1987): 1-78; Olatunde Bayo Lawuyi, “The Social Marketing of Elites: The Advertised Self in Obituaries and Congratulations in some Nigerian Dailies,” *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute* 61, 2 (1991): 247-263.

<sup>170</sup> Despite its ambitious inauguration, this column only appeared a few times between 1895 and 1897. Rev. Mojola Agbebi’s picture appeared in this column in the 13 November 1895 issue. Miss Sabina Patience Oyinkan who married with Dr. Alfred Leigh Sodipe appeared on 17 February 1897.

discussed in detail in the following sections, also fits the fourth category of the media of social memory. Although this will not be discussed in detail in this chapter, the articles on the non-elite indigenous forms of memorialising the deceased, such as the Adamorisha (a masquerade dance in memory of the deceased) appeared in nineteenth century Lagos newspapers. For instance, the *Lagos Weekly Record* reported the Adamorisha in columns of “Epitome of News” (7 January 1899, 6; 21 October 1899, 6) and also published an article criticising missionaries’ “ruthless” condemnation of the Adamorisha without understanding the embodied moral of this custom—that is, the “vanity of things mundane” (27 November 1897, 3).<sup>171</sup> In addition, memorial processions took place, not only at the time of British Empire celebrations, such as Empire Day, as discussed in Chapter 6, but also for commemoration of traditional elite. For instance, at the memorial ceremony of Prince Ademuyiwa in 1909, a “Procession consisting of about 300 Kroo people, Natives of Liberia, proceeded to Wesley Chapel (LWR, 16 October 1909, 3).

Regarding the fifth category, spaces, Glover Memorial Hall, which will be examined in the third part of Section 2, is an example of a place that serves as a medium in the transmission of memories. Memorial schools—such as the Bonetta Davies Memorial School<sup>172</sup> and Blaize’s Memorial Industrial Institute, discussed in Chapter 5—and memorial churches like the Townsend-Wood Memorial Church in Abeokuta (LWR, 10 February 1900, 3), are also worthy of mention, although this chapter does not include any examination of these institutes.

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<sup>171</sup> It was reported in performing Adamorisha “The best and most costly cloths are put on, dragged in the dust and trodden under foot, in order to show, that in so far as the deceased is concerned, such things count for nought, and thus conveying the general idea that with death every thing of worth in the world counts as but vanity” (LWR, 27 November 1897, 3).

<sup>172</sup> For information on Bonetta Davies Memorial School, see footnote 190.

#### 4.1.3. Outline of Chapter

This chapter examines the newspaper descriptions of memorial associations, which were organised for the purpose of perpetuating the memory of great men and women. Benedict Anderson ([1983] 1991) emphasises the roles of the products of print-capitalism, such as novels and newspapers, in the creation of national consciousness and imagined communities. In nineteenth and early twentieth century Lagos, in addition to printed materials, associational activities provided the space and time in which people shared simultaneous experiences. Newspaper descriptions of memorial campaigns served as a means of providing collective memory, regardless of individual participation in the activities.

Publishing a newspaper article on a particular memorial campaign went through the two processes of selective remembering and forgetting. First, someone whose life was considered worthy of being memorialised would be selected from all the people who existed at the time, and then the press would decide which events to record for the memorialisation. The press frequently emphasised the importance of the deceased to society, so that the memory of particular aspects of the chosen figure could be inscribed in the minds of the people. What is more, big men and women in Lagos, whom this chapter examines, went through double memorialisation. Memorial campaigns were organised (immaterial form of memorialisation) in order to establish memorial objects (materialised form of memorialisation), and the news of the campaigns were reported and fixed in the newspapers (materialised form of memorialisation).

The remembrance of the past changes, according to the needs of the present (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983; Halbwachs 1992). Through examining whose lives were considered worthy of memorialisation in the Lagos press, this chapter elucidates the

cultural values and practices of the people of Lagos at that time. Memorialisation also reflects certain societies' ideas about the future because, as Barber (2005) suggests, "the project of preservation is inseparable from the project of building for the future" (192). Newspaper descriptions of commemorative associations were discussed in connection with public interests, such as the progress of society, the unity of the people, or retaining racial pride; and the importance of memorial campaigns was justified in a similar context. It seems this was because there was a notion that a shared past was important for social solidarity, which was a necessity for the social progress and development of the "nation". What is notable here is that memorialisation was not only described as symbolic of England, but also as originally common in Yorubaland.

In addition, as will be discussed, these commemorative associations can be interpreted as an attempt to create a history of their own, and to share this history with illiterate and partly-literate people by giving charismatic figures a visual form, such as portrait and tablet. Memorialisation, namely, the act of recording their "own history", was described in the Lagos press as an important essence of "civilised" society that the Lagos educated elite aimed at achieving.

Section 1 has examined theories of social memory in Western academy as well as in the field of African studies. Section 2 deals with the early memorial campaigns in the 1880s, such as the T. B. Macaulay Memorial Association, Dr. King's Memorial Association and the Glover Memorial Fund. Section 3 examines Mrs. Denton and Mrs. Sapara William Memorial Committees; the Blyden Memorial Committee; and the Rev. James Johnson Memorial Committee, highlighting the issues of gender, outsiders, and commodification, respectively. Section 4 considers changes in the form of commemoration in the early twentieth century, including the rising practice of inserting memorial (obituary) poems in newspapers, and the establishment of Memorial Day. The

practice of publishing memorial poems shows that memorialisation in the Lagos press became a medium not only for “big men and women” of society, but also for the memorialisation of less prominent individuals.

## **4.2. Early Memorial Associations in 1880s Lagos**

### **4.2.1. T. B. Macaulay Memorial Association, 1883**

By the late nineteenth century, the idea of commemoration seems to have been widely accepted among the educated elite in the West African Settlement. The Lagos press repeatedly highlighted the necessity of paying homage to deceased respectable people in order to perpetuate their memory.

A move to raise money to commemorate what a newspaper of the time called, “respectable people” began in the 1880s in Lagos. The earliest attempt at commemoration recorded in Lagos newspapers was the Macaulay Memorial Association, organised by O. E. Macaulay<sup>173</sup> in memory of Rev. T. B. Macaulay,<sup>174</sup> the first Principal of the CMS Grammar School in Lagos. Five years after his death, on 8 June 1883, a concert was held at the Breadfruit Schoolroom by members of the

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<sup>173</sup> O. E. Macaulay was the editor of the *Eagle and Lagos Critic*. He was a son of T. B. Macaulay, a grandson of Bishop Samuel Ajayi Crowther (1809-91) and brother of Herbert Macaulay (1884-1946). Samuel Ajayi Crowther was the first African bishop of Anglican Church. He joined the British Niger expedition as interpreter and moved to Yorubaland since 1845 as one of the members of the CMS Yoruba Mission in 1845. He contributed translation of the Bible into Yoruba language and compilation of Yoruba language dictionary. Herbert Macaulay was a politician and journalist who is considered as the “father of Nigerian nationalism”. He established the Nigerian National Democratic Party in 1923, the first political party in Nigeria, and co-owned the *Lagos Daily News* in 1925 which became a mouthpiece of his oppositions toward British colonial government (Falola and Heaton 2008, xxiii & xxvii).

<sup>174</sup> Thomas Babington Macaulay (17 January 1826-17 January 1878) was the eldest son of Bishop Samuel Ajayi Crowther, a liberated African from Sierra Leone with Oyo origins.



association, mainly the pupils of the grammar school, for the purpose of raising funds to procure a suitable memorial to the deceased gentleman, “on whom devolved the sublime task of inaugurating the higher education of the future generation of this island” (LO, 21 June 1883, 3-4). With the attendance of His Excellency the Governor of Gold Coast Colony, Sir Samuel Rowe, the Breadfruit Schoolroom “was filled from corner to corner” and the concert, directed by R. A. Coker, organist of Christ Church, with a choir, duets and performances of piano, violin, and accordion, was reported as ending in a “favourable result”. In his opening appeal, the Rev. S. P. Johnson of the Wesleyan Missionary Society mentioned that “the memorial would take the shape of a bronze statue, which would require an exorbitant amount of money to procure, but, something, worthy of the man whom we esteem and admire” (E&LC, 30 June 1883, 2). Despite the hopes of the promoters of this memorial association, no subsequent activities can be found. Ten years later, in 1893, a letter was sent to the *Record* requesting the Macaulay Memorial association to resume, with collected money from the concert, the “long protracted” project of “providing a suitable memorial of” T. B. Macaulay. However, no record of any subsequent activity relating to this matter can be found (LWR, 28 October 1893, 3). Calls for memorials to T. B. Macaulay and other leading figures continued to be voiced in the 1920s in the Yoruba-English bilingual press though it is not sure how many memorialisations were realised (Barber 2009a, 6-7).

This failure was one example of the attitude of people in Lagos toward memorialisation in the nineteenth century. According to the editor of the *Lagos Observer*, “impracticability” and the “non-lasting nature of public movement in the settlement [Lagos colony]” had already become a “commonly accepted opinion” by the late nineteenth century, since these campaigns often “miscarried almost simultaneously with their inception” and the promoters’ efforts “met with no results whatever worthy of

mention” (2 & 16 July 1885, 2).<sup>175</sup> The public movement, like the memorial campaign, was discussed in connection with “civilisation” and “progress”. The editorial emphasised failure to rouse the public to memorialise “praise-worthy *endeavours*” like those by T. B. Macaulay as “disgraceful drawbacks in our boasted ‘rapid strides in civilization and enlightenment’”, and suggested that its causes were “lack of perseverance” and deficiency in “public-spiritedness” (ibid).

In addition, the case of the T. B. Macaulay Memorial movement shows that Lagos newspapers sometimes served as the self-monument of the editor or editor’s family. For instance, O. E. Macaulay, the editor of the *Eagle and Lagos Critic*, set up the Macaulay Memorial Association and called, in his paper, for donations to procure a suitable memorial to his father, the late Rev. T. B. Macaulay.

#### 4.2.2. Dr. N. T. King’s Memorial Stained Glass Window, 1885

The first successful memorial movement for Africans themselves in 1880s Lagos was the King’s Memorial Fund, in memory of Dr. Nathaniel Thomas King (1847-1884), who was the first African to qualify in the practice of medicine in Nigeria. After five years of study in the CMS Grammar School in Freetown, King proceeded to the United Kingdom in 1871. He obtained medical degrees (Bachelor of Medicine, Master of Surgery and Doctor of medicine) at Edinburgh University and returned to Lagos in 1876 to become a medical adviser to the CMS until his death in 1884 (Kopytoff 1965, 291; Gwam 1967, 25-30).

Only 12 days after his death, in June 1884, the Committee for his memorial was

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<sup>175</sup> The scheme of erecting a monument in memory of James Swantz Parker, the District Commissioner of Lagos, is another example of a memorial movement that resulted in failure (LO, 18 June 1887, 3).

organised (E&LC, 28 June 1884, 2). “The idea of erecting some monument to the late Doctor’s memory was first conceived and uttered by European gentlemen, Dr. Macarthy, the Colonial Surgeon, Mr. Neville, the Mail Agent”, and Rev. C. H. V. Gollmer (LO, 8 October 1885, 2). However, King’s Memorial Committee also included the following members of the educated elite: Revs. James Johnson, N. Johnson, U. Oluwole, O. E. Macaulay (a Secretary of the Committee), J. A. Payne and J. B. Benjamin. At the inaugural meeting of the Committee, it was resolved that a suitable memorial should assume the form of two almshouses “within the enclosure of the Colonial Hospital for indigent aged paupers”, since “this form of a memorial” would “not only be ornamental but useful” (E&LC, 30 August 1884, 3-4). Despite the ambitious scheme of the Committee, however, two months later, in August 1884, the Committee failed to receive a favourable reaction or support from the Colonial Government, and had to abandon the original scheme; and it was decided to provide a stained glass window in a chancel of Christ Church instead (E&LC, 12 & 26 September 1885, 2-3).

In the Committee meeting, the importance of memorialisation was discussed in connection with the future development of society. If there was no reward for people who lived and died for their country, such as commemoration—as in the case of the Greek and Roman heroes—present and future generations would not rise to work for their own community:

Memorials are the tokens of a nation’s gratitude and who lives for his country and not for himself, will always be ready to appreciate the efforts of others to pay honor to whom honor is due... If Lagos, nay, Western Africa desire to rise, and to have men worthy to be numbered among the world’s great men, she must set an impetus before the young; and very few will dispute, that the late Dr. King, was by no means an unfitting personage, whose memorial should be a series of the nation’s prizes which the young as well as the old have to fight in the battle of life

(E&LC, 30 August 1884, 3-4).

During the movement, lists of subscribers to the King's memorial movement appeared in the *Eagle and Lagos Critic*. For instance, in September 1884, a list of 32 names of subscribers with the amounts of money they paid, £140 15s in total, was inserted (27 September 1884, 4). These lists of subscribers appearing in Lagos newspapers encouraged a spirit of competition among the educated elite and satisfied the donors' desires to show off their charity, respectability and wealth.

Here we can see the article on the ceremony of the unveiling of the Memorial Window in Christ Church, Faji, on 22 September 1885. After expressing his gratitude to the supporters of the ceremony, Rev. James Johnson pointed out one of the reasons for the widespread lamentable fact that there had been no memorial erected to Africans themselves on the West Coast before "King's memorial window" unveiled that day:

we have... suffered ourselves to be carried away with the idea that nothing of Africa is either good or great, unless it corresponds with a European idea or model, and thus it is, our great men have passed away unremembered, unhonoured and unsung. Further, our life in British Settlements on the Coast has not been a national one; we are not a nation, but a collection of individuals of different tribes, though of the same race, under a foreign government, with divergent feelings and aspirations, and whom it has been found difficult to fuse into one and make one great nation of. We have no national sentiment, ambition or aspiration, and no national pride of and thankfulness for our great men. But it is not so in the interior countries among independent native tribes and nations, whether it be in Yoruba, the Niger, Sherbro or Timneh. In this Yoruba country, we know what homage the people pay to the memory of their departed great men; we find their names interwoven with many of their songs, sung to their praises on the Lagoon, on the Ogun River, in the farm-huts, at the fireside, at home, and at the public dances...As it is, we on the coast think more of the great men of England or of European than of those who were or are great among us (LO, 8 October 1885, 3).

Rev. James Johnson then mentioned the British custom of paying homage to their ancestors:

During my short visit to England in 1873, I was much impressed with the large number of monuments erected and many of them very expensively, to departed worth in almost every large town. I asked myself why is this? The answer suggested itself to me that England is unwilling to forget the men who have helped to make her great... and who can doubt that these silent monuments have contributed much to increase and enhance her greatness? I am therefore glad that we have made a beginning (LO, 8 October 1885, 3).

What seems interesting in this extract is that commemoration of great men is connected with the idea of the “nation”. Johnson cited the Yoruba as well as the British as examples of “nations” accustomed to paying respect to their historical great men, and also as models that people in Lagos should follow. It might be reasonable to say that Johnson treated the knowledge of history as the first step to national integration.

A speech delivered by W. T. G. Lawson<sup>176</sup> also attributed England’s greatness and progress to Christianity and the “nation’s acknowledgment” of their great history, represented as monuments such as “a stone bust or iron statue”. He suggested Lagos could join “civilised” societies that had customs of commemoration, such as Rome, Greece and England, with a successful memorialisation like that of Dr. King (LO, 8 October 1885, 3).<sup>177</sup>

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<sup>176</sup> William Thomas George Lawson served as assistant Colonial Surveyor in the Lagos government from 1879 to 1886. For a biographical sketch of Lawson, see page 291-92 of Kopytoff (1965).

<sup>177</sup> It would be useful to cite the following extract from W. T. G. Lawson’s speech: “What has consummated the greatness of England? What have made her sons bleed and die and are now ready to bleed and die for? What has produced her giants of literature, art and sciences, and developed those personifications of the height of human goodness and true greatness? I ask, is it

#### 4.2.3. Glover Memorial Fund, 1887

The Glover Memorial Fund was another successful commemoration activity in 1880s Lagos. This campaign was organised in memory, not of an African, but of the late Sir John Hawley Glover, Administrator and Governor of Lagos between 1863 and 1872, who died on 30 September 1885. However, the result of this campaign, Glover Memorial Hall, has been used for local interests, irrespective of race and religion, to the present time. As will be discussed later, the name of Glover was used as an icon of the “good old days”, especially in the context of criticising contemporary Colonial Governments. Glover Memorial Hall is categorised as the fifth type of media of social memory in Burke’s definition that space acts as a medium in the transmission of memories. It was the media to convey, not only the memory of Governor Glover himself, but also memories of various prominent figures, because many of the memorial campaign meetings were carried out there, and portraits of different figures were placed on walls of the hall as the result of these memorial meetings, as will be shown in later sections.

Two months after the death of Sir John Hawley Glover, a mass meeting was held at the Court Hall, Tinubu Square on 24 November 1885, where it was resolved that Glover Memorial Fund would be organised for the purpose of erecting a memorial to commemorate the services rendered by Sir John Glover (LO, 3 & 17 December 1885, 2).

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her wealth? I reply, Sir, nay. Added to religion, it is a nation’s acknowledgment, a country’s gratitude, a seat in the Lords, a vote of thanks of the Commons, a public funeral and burial of Westminster Abbey—it is a stone bust or iron statue, and these to-day gigantic and wonderful tokens of gratitude had once a small beginning, perhaps smaller than the Window we unveiled this afternoon. Yes, Sir, I look at this window as the foreshadow of brighter days for Africa those days when men shall be measured not by the amount of wealth by which they are surrounded but proportion to the magnitude of their souls” (LO, 8 October 1885, 3).

As this campaign was for memorialisation of the late Governor, the Glover Memorial Fund was successful in obtaining sufficient support from Europeans and the government. A report on a special representative meeting on 20 January 1886 contains a list of 88 individual subscribers who had donated £165 10s; individual subscribers, such as C. J. George, R. B. Blaize, J. J. Thomas, J. W. Cole and Z. A. Williams, who promised to contribute large amounts of money, such as £100 each; and J. A. Payne, I. H. Willoughby and J. S. Leigh who promised to pay £50 each (LO, 21 January 1886, 2).<sup>178</sup> Compared with the memorial campaigns in later years, people in 1880s Lagos were willing to contribute large amounts for these memorial movements.

The Glover Memorial Fund joined Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee Celebration Committee to organise the celebrations. By the time of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Queen Victoria's reign in June 1887, the people of Lagos had already contributed a sum of about £1500, and the Lagos Colonial Government offered the Committee the old Customs' Warehouse and adjoining land as a site for the memorial. At the ceremony of the Golden Jubilee, the cornerstone of Glover Memorial Hall was laid (E&LC, July 1887, 2-3; LO, 2 & 9 July 1887, 2-3). This was initially the project for launching the Town Hall, Public Library and Reading Room and of erecting a statue in Lagos (LO, 6 March 1886, 2). However, it was not until 1899, fourteen years after the death of Sir John Glover, that the construction of Glover Memorial Hall was completed.<sup>179</sup>

Newspaper descriptions of Sir John Glover are now examined. In an editorial

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<sup>178</sup> The list of subscribers for the Glover Memorial Fund not only contains the amounts of money and names of the people who subscribed, but in some cases, there is a short message, such as "In memory of his late father" or "In memory of his late Grand Mother, Elizabeth Brown" (LO, 21 January 1886, 2).

<sup>179</sup> Six Europeans and six African members were selected as Trustees (LWR, 22 October 1898, 4), however, criticisms of the Trustees can be found in newspaper relating to the dilapidation of the Hall and the ungenerous attitude toward people who hired the hall (LWR, 10 December 1904; 4 May 1907; 20 August 1910). See Plate 10-1 in Appendix 10 for the photograph of Glover Memorial Hall in the early twentieth century.

titled “Oba Goloba”<sup>180</sup> regarding the opening of Glover Memorial Hall in November 1899, Sir John Hawley Glover was called “the Maker of Lagos” and was introduced with the highest tribute:

His influence was felt to a great distance in the interior, where the name GLOBA—native pronunciation of GLOVER—became a household word, and the title by which successive Governors of Lagos were for a long time known in the Hinterland... The secret of Governor GLOVER’s success is to be found in his friendship for and sympathy with the people. In every work he undertook he never reckoned without the Native, whom he sought to study and thoroughly understand, and whose confidence he gained to a degree that it is safe to say few Governors—if any—besides himself have ever succeeded in doing (LS, 15 November 1899, 3).

Despite the fact that Glover was not so well-accepted in his reign and that one of the reasons for his departure from Lagos in 1872 is considered to be his extravagance (Brown 1964, 139), the editorial on the death of Glover refers to him as “an Englishman in whom was the embodiment of the qualities and virtues which make up the true gentlemen” and “Never was a governor known to have had such particular concern for Africa and the Africans, no not before, nor after him” (LO, 19 November 1885, 2).

His name was occasionally inserted in the Lagos newspapers as a symbol of the “good old days” when there was a good “society” in Lagos that was free from tribal prejudice. In an editorial titled “The Society of Lagos”, the *Eagle and Lagos Critic* lamented lack of social unity in Lagos and said:

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<sup>180</sup> According to Sir John Glover’s obituary, written by John O. Payne in 1885, Glover was “better known and recognized amongst the natives as Babba Goloba or Obba Goloba” (E&LC, 24 October & 14 November 1885, 2). These nicknames repeatedly appeared in the Lagos press. The fact that Sir John was honoured with the traditional status of Yoruba king (oba) and father/elder (baba) shows closeness and sympathetic attitude of the Lagos press toward Sir John.



Let us review the society of Lagos such as it is... Governor Glover like a true Englishman who loved Lagos with the love of a native, being convinced that his protégé need the necessary foundation to enable her to rise which is no other than a proper society; at his own expense and time and at no small personal sacrifice collected the most prominent intelligent and promising of the inhabitants and created thereby a society. He taught them that society means ‘Union in one general interest, social sympathy, companionship, fellowship and company’. As long as Sir John Glover remained in Lagos the *society* of the country was alive (E&LC, 28 July 1883, 2-3).

The name of Glover was also used in the context of criticising the contemporary Colonial Government. In the early twentieth century, a letter by “Supra” to the *Standard*, criticising the Colonial Government, mentioned Glover’s name as a good old days English friend of Africa. The letter opposed the Colonial Government’s policies of prohibiting preservation of water in private dwellings in order to prevent the propagation of mosquitoes and of abolishing the practice of dyeing clothes in Lagos, although there were “hundreds of women who live in Lagos by dyeing clothes”. “Supra” lamented and said: “Formerly we thought that the English were the ‘African’s friend’ among the Europeans, but all those thoughts must be buried with the Wilberforce, Venns, Sharpe, Buxton etc., etc. Viva Glover in this line, Glover for ever in Lagos!!!” (LS, 17 July 1901, 5).

Regardless of race or religion many different meetings and entertainments were held at this hall. Not only Governmental or European organisations, such as the general meeting of Lagos Chamber of Commerce and Legislative Council, but also nationalist movements, such as the meetings of the People’s Union and Lagos Auxiliary of Aborigines Protection Society took place there. Various ethnic groups also held meetings there between the 1930s and 1940s, such as the Ijebu-Ife Improvement Society, the Epetedo Union, the Ife Descendant Union, the Ekiti National Association, the Ijebu

Community in Lagos, the Benin Community in Lagos, and the Sierra Leone Friendly Society.<sup>181</sup> There were performances of “native plays”, such as a dramatic entertainment by the Ijesha Auxiliary Friendly Society in 1934.<sup>182</sup>

Glover Memorial Hall is one of the rare examples of memorial institutions still located today (in 2011) on Customs Street, Lagos. Portraits of prominent figures, the results of the memorial campaigns discussed in this chapter, were hung on the walls of the ground floor of the hall. Glover Memorial Hall was demolished to facilitate the construction of the present hall in 1960. Since then it has undergone considerable renovation, making it convenient for staging theatrical performances, lectures, exhibitions, concerts, film shows, meetings, conventions, high society wedding receptions, etc.<sup>183</sup> Appointment of the new Trustee Board member in 1991 encouraged the activities of recording the history of the Hall. The history of the hall and the life story of Sir John Glover were included in the pamphlets of performances, and in 1999 the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Hall was celebrated. On 24 May 2007, busts of Madam Tinubu and Sir John Glover were unveiled at the Union Bank, Marina, Lagos.<sup>184</sup>

So far, this section has examined three memorial campaigns from the 1880s. Not all of the early attempts at memorialisation succeeded in attracting public attention, however, these memorial campaigns were described as symbols of civilised society. Therefore, the success of the campaigns automatically became evidence of the progress

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<sup>181</sup> Box 77, Herbert Macaulay Papers, Ibadan University Library Special Collection, Nigeria.

<sup>182</sup> Glover Memorial Hall played an important role in the development of early theatre performances in Nigeria. Reviews of the performances and related discussions appeared in the Lagos newspapers and contributed to the development of play critics. See Plates 10-2 and 10-3 in Appendix 10 for the examples of the programme of local entertainments.

<sup>183</sup> See Plate 10-4 in Appendix 10, for a pamphlet of the present Glover Memorial Hall.

<sup>184</sup> Sowole, Tajudeen. Madam Tinubu, Glover come alive in Lagos. *The Guardian, Nigeria*, accessed 12 November 2007, <http://www.guardiannewsngr.com/arts/article01/290507>.

I am grateful to Professor John Godwin (Department of Architecture, University of Lagos), one of the members of the Board of Trustees, for his generous assistance, providing information and pamphlets relating to Glover Memorial Hall during my archival research in Nigeria, 2007.

of Lagos society compared with the others, and competitive feelings toward other British West African countries were in evidence. For instance, in 1893, a scheme of Bishop Samuel Ajayi, from Crowther Memorial Church in Sierra Leone triggered off discussions on the need for a similar church in Abeokuta (LWR, 18 November 1893, 3). In 1899 in Lagos, there was a proposal for enlargement of Christ Church in memory of Bishop Crowther, but it did not meet with the approval of the public and attempts to raise funds failed (LS, 8 March 1899, 2).

It is also notable that funds raised for memorials sometimes provided financial help for the family of the deceased. In May 1892, the A. C. Willoughby Memorial Fund was established in memory of Abraham Claudius Willoughby, who was killed in the Anglo-Jebu War. He had been worked as a Deputy Registrar at Leckie and voluntarily joined the Expeditionary Force to Jebe that refused to sign a treaty with Lagos Colonial Government (LWR, 28 May 1892, 2). Rather than commemorate the life of the deceased, this memorial fund-raising activity was organised for the purpose of supporting the remaining family of this “loyal” African officer. £85 8s 4d was collected by 142 colonial government officials as testimony to their regard for the deceased (LWR, 13 August 1892, 2-3).

#### **4.3. Memorialisation in the Early Twentieth Century**

In the early twentieth century, a common activity for memorial associations was the collection of funds to place memorial portraits of the deceased in public places such as Glover Memorial Hall and to establish a memorial tablet for the deceased. Compared with memorial campaigns in the late nineteenth century, money contributed by individual subscribers decreased, but this was not an indication that public enthusiasm

for memorialisation had declined. It was an indication that memorialisation had become accessible not only to a few “big men and women”, but also to increasing numbers of the elite. At Garber Square, Lagos, there was even a business called Paris & Co. that sold memorial tablets starting from 30 shillings (LS, 12 January 1910, 3).<sup>185</sup>

In addition, as we have seen in the newspaper articles on Dr. N. T. King’s Memorial Window in the 1880s, memorialisation was reported as an essential way for non-elite indigenous people to pay homage to their ancestors, and as a necessity for a civilised society like England. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the same notion was repeated in the *Standard*. In the article titled “Memorial”, the *Standard* discussed the meaning of memorial and said:

From time immemorial it has been the custom among all nations to mark the last resting place of their beloved dead—in civilized as well as uncivilised communities. We find in civilised countries, such as England, for instance, that after burying their highly respected dead in cemeteries, monuments are erected to keep their memory green. With our own people in the interior, the custom obtains of burying their dead in houses with the same object and to the same end. As civilization advanced among the European nations, we find, that they not only erect monuments to their dead *in Cemeteries* but had mural tablets placed in churches and public places as well—as a constant and visible reminder that such a person had lived and worshipped in that edifice with them (18 May 1904, 3).

#### 4.3.1. Gendering Memorial: Lady Denton Memorial, 1901 and Mrs. Anna Sophia Williams Memorial, 1904

From the beginning of the twentieth century, memorialisation for women began to

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<sup>185</sup> Paris & Co. at Garber Square, Lagos, inserted the following advertisement in the *Lagos Standard* in 1910. “Any photograph however old can be renewed and enlarged to any size. Coloured Enlargements can also be had RARE OPPORTUNITY. We are also prepared to supply MEMORIAL TABLETS from 30/- complete upwards” (LS, 12 January 1910, 3).

appear in the Lagos press. The following two examples show that memorial campaigns for women and related newspaper articles played a role of disseminating images of ideal Christian women that was strongly influenced by Victorian gender ideology. In the late nineteenth century, elite women and their parents in Lagos strove to acquire benefits from Christian marriage. Christianity and Western education influenced the status of women in Lagos. These brought economic and legal changes in women's roles, ideology and opportunities. While Christian marriage brought them legal rights of inheritance, women's autonomy and economic independence were restricted under "Victorian ideas about the separate spheres of men and women" (Mann 1985, 78). According to Mann, "women were regarded as the purer, more pious sex, whose special duty was to uphold the family and society's moral values. If the home failed to exhaust women's time and energy, they could turn their attention to religion, philanthropy or social reform, unleashing their authority in the community" (78-79). This Victorian view of women's roles in society can be seen in the newspaper description of the following two memorial activities in Lagos.

The first properly organised memorialisation for a woman in Lagos was that of Dame Jean Margret Alan Denton, wife of George C. Denton, Colonial Secretary of Lagos and South Nigeria, between 1888 and 1900. Soon after Lady Denton passed away, on 19 July 1900, the Lady Denton Memorial Fund was established.<sup>186</sup> In an obituary that appeared in the *Record*, she was described as a dutiful and gracious figure. As a president of the Ladies Recreation Club, she devoted herself to the duty of not only supporting her family, but also the local community, especially through events relating to children and women. "Her gracious form moved through the narrowest streets of the

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<sup>186</sup> The Trustees of the Denton Memorial Fund included the following: C. Tanbaci as in the chair, A. Erhardt, C. J. George, J. A. O. Payne, Peacock, Dr. Randle, C. A. S. Williams, K. Ajasa, G. A. Williams and Henry Carr (LS, 24 October 1900, 3).

town, and her bright face was seen lighting up the abodes of rich and poor alike.” She was described as one of those “who know the natives, who sympathise with them and have learned to love them; who look upon themselves as the servants of those whom they rule, and rule by serving them; who do everything that in them lies to bridge over the yawning gulf which still separates colour from colour, race from race, and creed from creed” (LWR, 21 July 1900, 3).

Four meetings were held for the purpose of deciding what form the Memorial should take. It was initially resolved to build “a small Chapel at Ikoyi cemetery, to be used in connection with the lost rites for the dead” and “as a resting place for mourners” (LS, 29 August 1900, 2). However, because of insufficiency of fund, it was decided that, instead, the raised money would be placed on deposit in the Bank of British West Africa and would be used for purchase of annual prizes at the Exhibition of School Work, to be called “Lady Denton Prizes” for school girls’ needle work competitions (LS, 24 October 1900, 3).<sup>187</sup> A list of 194 subscribers, who raised a total of £251, appeared in the *Standard* in October 1900 (24 October 1900, 3 & 5).

In February 1901, a memorial portrait of Lady Denton was displayed on the wall of Glover Memorial Hall, financed by the children’s memorial fund (see Appendix 11). Newspaper articles on the ceremony of unveiling the portrait of Lady Denton appeared and she was represented as the guardian of moral virtues, interested in and contributing to indigenous female education. It was reported that both Governor Sir William MacGregor and Bishop James Johnson’s speech at the ceremony laid emphasis upon two “chief features displayed in the characters of the late Lady Denton and the late Queen”: the first was “their devotion to duty and under the impulse of a sense of

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<sup>187</sup> “Lady Denton Prizes” was initiated from 1901, and £7 on average was spent annually for this purpose (LS, 4 August 1909, 4; 28 June 1911, 4).

responsibility they led a life worthy to be copied". The second was "the sympathetic nature and love of their fellow man displayed in both characters. The late Lady Denton, in her sympathy with the native, had been very useful to him and had become very popular with native" (LS, 13 February 1901, 3).

In November 1901, a brass memorial tablet was donated to Christ Church from the Ladies Recreation Club. The brass plate was reported to have been "designed by a lady in England", and handsomely engraved with the following inscription: "This Tablet is erected by the members of the Ladies Recreation Club in affectionate remembrance of Dame Jean Margret Alan Denton, who departed this life 19 July 1900. Dearly loved and deeply mourned by all who knew her. 'These things command you that you love one another.—John XV. 17'" (LWR, 26 October 1901, 5). At the ceremony of unveiling the memorial tablet, the representation of Lady Denton as an ideal woman was repeated and it was reported that Governor MacGregor had said: "Lady Denton was as you all know an eminently unselfish woman. She thought of others more than she thought of herself" (LWR, 7 December 1901, 5).

Here, it would be useful to note difference between memorialisation of deceased by memorial tablets and gravestones in Lagos at the time. Inscriptions in memorial tablets and inscriptions in gravestones could have a similar form,<sup>188</sup> however, the locations that memorial tables and gravestones placed often differed. While memorial tables were established at church yards located in the centre of Lagos, gravestones were often placed in the Ikoyi cemetery far away from the town.<sup>189</sup> The Ikoyi cemetery was

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<sup>188</sup> Paris & Co. at Garber Square, Lagos, inserted advertisement of gravestone as well as memorials with inscriptions (LS, 10 May 1911, 1).

<sup>189</sup> We can see that Ikoyi cemetery was recognised as distance from the centre of Lagos from the following articles. Lady Denton Memorial Fund at first proposed to establish a small chapel in memory of Lady Denton at Ikoyi cemetery because "the distance to Ikoyi from the town is so great" that people need a resting place (LS, 29 August 1900, 2). In addition, the article on the late Rev. Metcalfe Sunter, mentioned that his remain was "laid to rest in Ikoyi Cemetery—far

not a place people frequently visited to honour the deceased apart from funeral occasions, while memorial tables were more accessible for people in Lagos. Only selected people were provided with memorial tablets at church yards. What is more, only selected people had memorial tablets which were results of memorial campaigns, recorded by the Lagos press. While the news of memorial tablets established for the memory of European females and European clergies in Lagos were often reported as one-sentence short news, memorial campaigns for African elite were treated as big events. Memorial campaigns did not always end in success, but to be reported in the newspaper itself seems to have been an aim of launching the campaign so that the memory of deceased was perpetuated in the text.

The first instance of a memorial for an African female is a memorial tablet and portrait of Mrs. Anna Sophia Williams in 1904.<sup>190</sup> Anna Sophia Williams was a wife of C. A. Sapara Williams (1855-1915), the first qualified lawyer in Lagos.<sup>191</sup> Anna Sophia was born in Elmina, Gold Coast, to Robert Hutchinson, who served as the first mayor of Cape Coast in the late 1850s. She was taken to Edinburgh by her aunt at the age of four for education, staying until the early 1870s, when she returned to Cape Coast to be a lady principal of the Government School. In 1886, she married Christopher Alexander Sapara Williams, and came to Lagos in 1888. She assisted in the formation of the Faji Circuit Ladies' Guild. She served as President of the Ladies Recreation Club (after Lady

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away from his home and friends" (LWR, 24 December 1892, 4).

<sup>190</sup> Another example of memorialisation of an African woman is the Sara Forbes Bonetta Davies Memorial School that opened in 1908 with the presidency of Stella Coker, second daughter of Sara, for the education for girls. Sara was taken to England from Dahomey by Captain Forbes, R.N., of H.M.S. Bonetta in 1849, and presented to Queen Victoria who became her guardian. For details of Sara's life, see the obituary of her husband, James Pinson Labulo Davies, a wealthy merchant in Lagos (LWR, 5 May 1906, 3).

<sup>191</sup> Sapara Williams was born and educated at Freetown, Sierra Leone. He was educated in Sierra Leone, Lagos and in England and worked as Barrister and Solicitor of the Gold Coast Colony between 1880 and 1888 before he returned to Lagos where he practiced law until his death in 1915 (Gwam 1967, 9-14).



Denton) and Lagos Ladies League, whose object was to minister to the sick and poor (LWR 30 January 1904, 3; Mann 1985, 83). Funding for the memorial tablet was raised by the members of the Lagos Ladies' League and donation for the portrait was made by the Ladies Recreation Club. The ceremony of the unveiling of her portrait on 7 December 1904 was attended by the Governor and Deputy Governor, as well as by eminent members of the educated elite, such as Bishop Oluwole, Henry Carr and Obadiah Johnson.

Many elite African women had to endure their husband's infidelities even after Christian marriages; however, Anna Sophia Williams was given as an example of an elite woman who had a very fortunate Christian marriage (Mann 1985, 83). In the Lagos newspapers, she was described as having fulfilled the responsibility of the ideal Christian wife who supported her husband and devoted herself to philanthropic work in her spare time. The oration, delivered by the Rev. J. E. Wright at her memorial service, held at Wesleyan Church, Tinubu on 26 January 1904, remarked as follows:

Our late sister [Mrs. Anna Sophia Williams] was an exemplary wife, for she served her husband and family with untiring devotion and endeared herself to every member of her household by her complacent character, her kind words and genuine motherly sympathy. In society she was known as a woman of exemplary character and high attainments, possessing the most admirable qualities of a gentlewoman by which she won the affection, high esteem and confidence of all who knew her (LWR, 30 January 1904, 3).

An example of an "exemplary wife" can also be found in the newspaper reports of the ceremony of the unveiling of the portrait of Mrs. Sapara Williams at Glover Memorial Hall on 7 December 1904. Mrs. Williams was described as "a lady of high culture, with character gentle, sweet and pure". It was reported, that Henry Carr

delivered the speech, which emphasised Mrs Sapara William's contribution to society through helping the poor:

... perhaps what in her those who knew her well will oftenest think of are the sincerity and a simplicity which were both heightened by an indefinable note of distinction and which were in close connexion with her charming good temper and her calm contemplation of life (LWR, 10 December 1904, 5).

In addition, both Africans and Europeans gathered on the day to perpetuate her memory. Attendance of people not only from Lagos, but also from the Gold Coast, was described as proof of "the oneness of the members of the human family" that was symbolised by a person like the late Mrs. Williams, who had been working as a pre-eminent "reconciler" in the society. According to Henry Carr's speech, she "belonged to the noble band of those who do all that in them lies to bridge over the gulf which 'by our fault, or by our fate, separates colour from colour and race from race'" (LWR, 10 December 1904, 5). This is because, through her work, Anna Sophia formed the connecting bond between the older and younger members of the above associations, and exerted herself in "uniting a bond of affection and agreement" between the people of the Gold Coast and the people of Lagos (LWR, 30 January 1904, 3).

As we have seen, women described in the Lagos newspapers as worthy of memorialisation, such as Lady Denton and Mrs. Anna Sophia Williams, were models of the Victorian ideal woman. These newspaper descriptions might have played a part in distributing the image of the ideal woman. In addition, the act of memorialisation at the ceremony of the unveiling of the portrait was described as "the very embodiment of our social cohesion" in Lagos society (LWR, 10 December 1904, 6).

#### 4.3.2. Memorialising Outsiders: Edward Wilmot Blyden Memorial, 1912-1914

This part considers the significance of commemorating outsiders such as British dignitaries and intellectuals who had never lived in Lagos. Several memorial activities were carried out for British Governors of Lagos (later Nigeria) and their wives for their contributions to the development of local society, but memorialising outsiders seems to have had a different meaning. As can be seen from the several failed memorial campaigns for people from outside Lagos, such as the William Wilberforce Memorial Fund in 1913,<sup>192</sup> the Lagos educated elite were acknowledged as part of the Western intellectual circle. These memorialisations should not be regarded as blind praise for intellectuals outside Lagos. Newspaper descriptions relating to this campaign emphasised the wider framework of the African race, and Blyden's memorial campaign became the occasion for people in Lagos to discuss the idea of progress/civilisation in African form.

One notable example is a memorial campaign for Edward Wilmot Blyden in 1912-1915. Edward Wilmot Blyden (1832-1912) was an educator and statesman in Liberia. He was born in St. Thomas, Virgin Islands (the West Indies) and moved to Liberia in 1851 as a writer, diplomat and politician. He worked in Lagos from 1896 to 1897 as a government agent for native affairs. His idea of a racially specific manner of progress and cultural nationalism influenced the educated elite in West Africa. Blyden rejected the prevailing notion of the inferiority of the black man but sought to show that

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<sup>192</sup> The Wilberforce Memorial Fund was organised, in December 1913, in Lagos, for the purpose of erecting a memorial in memory of "William Wilberforce, Buxton and other pious men through whose efforts the abolition of the Transatlantic Slavery was effected" (LS, 24 December 1913, 7). S. Alfred Coker served as Hon. Secretary and collected. At the beginning of 1915, £62 11s 11d was deposited for this fund in the Bank of British West Africa, but it suspended the activities due to WWI, and no further activities can be found.

each race has a special contribution to make to world civilisation, namely, not just for material development, but to include the spiritual aspects of the world (Blyden 1887, 126-127 & 316-17). Blyden, in his *Christianity, Islam and the Negro Race* (1887), argued for a model of progress specific to each race. According to him, there was “no absolute or essential superiority” or “no absolute or essential inferiority” between Africans and Europeans, because of a “difference of endowment and difference of destiny”. The Africans and the Europeans “are not moving in the same groove, with an immeasurable distance between them, but on parallel lines” He proclaimed that African progress should differ from that of Europeans, being not only led by Africans, but also being shaped by Africans (Blyden 1887, 317).<sup>193</sup> Blyden’s idea that African progress would follow a path that suited the peculiarities of the “African race” was widely accepted by the educated African elite in British West Africa (Zachernuk 1991). We can see one of the examples in the column of “Weekly Notes” of the *Record* in 1904:

The attempt to develop Africa on European lines can only end in failure. It is like rearing a bird in a cage with the result of vitiated instinct and a gradual pining away which end in death. The African, if he wants to progress, must go on his own lines, he must suffer himself to be pushed suddenly from the twilight of a civilization which has its roots and the first impulse deep in the past of a thousand years. The glare will blind or tend to reduce him to a blinkering idiot. Originality is conducive to a healthy development of the physical and mental organization, and draws respect (21 May 1904, 3).

Six months after Blyden’s death on 3 August 1912, an inaugural meeting of the

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<sup>193</sup> According to Blyden’s *Christianity, Islam and the Negro Race* (1887), “The mistake which Europeans often make in considering questions of Negro improvement and the future of Africa, is in supposing that the Negro is the European in embryo—in the undeveloped stage—and that when, by-and-by, he shall enjoy the advantages of civilisation and culture, he will become like the European; in other words, that the Negro is on the same line of progress, in the same groove, with the European, but infinitely in the rear” (316).

Blyden Memorial Committee was held at Glover Memorial Hall under the presidency of the Hon. C. A. Sapara Williams, to consider ways and means of effectuating a local permanent memorial to the late Dr. E. W. Blyden (LS, 14 August 1912, 3).<sup>194</sup> The purpose of the meeting was to raise subscriptions for a commemoration of the late Dr. Blyden, and it was resolved that the memorial would include (1) a life-size portrait or sketch of the deceased patriot, to be placed in some prominent place of general public resort in Lagos, and (2) a scholarship of the highest standard and utility, to be known as the “Blyden Scholarship”, open to African youths of whatever tribe, creed, country or nation, to be set up in any school, college or university in Africa, or for a school that would be known as “the Blyden Memorial School”, where industrial and technical knowledge would be imparted (LWR, 10 August, 3; 24 August 1912, 3; LS, 28 August 1912, 6).

Like previous memorial campaigns, the prospective plans were not realised, and it was not until 1914, two years after the first memorial committee meeting, that a portrait of Blyden was unveiled (see Appendix 12).<sup>195</sup> During these two years, various discussions took place in the newspapers in order to encourage progress of the delayed campaign. Here, rhetoric regarding the African origin of memorialisation was repeated. In a letter from “Observer” (pseudonym) to the *Standard*, it was said that the assertion by “Janus”, a columnist of the *Standard*, that the Negro was no hero-worshipper was true only of “the *hybrid* Negro”: the author of the letter argued that “the aboriginal Negro” was a true hero-worshipper, as the stories of Sango, Oya, and other African

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<sup>194</sup> At this meeting, the following persons were appointed as members of the Blyden Memorial Committee: C. A. Sapara Williams as Chairman, S. J. Sawyer as Vice Chairman and Treasurer, Mojola Agbebi, J. K. Coker, T. L. Harrison, Rev. J. G. Campbell, J. A. Lakeru, Wallace Brown, E. A. Ojo, and T. B. Dawodu as Secretary (LWR, 10 August 1912, 3).

<sup>195</sup> Total amount of donation toward Blyden Memorial Fund cannot be found, but at least 28 subscribers donated a total of £3217s 6d according to one report by the Memorial Committee (LS, 3 February 1915, 7).

deities abundantly testified. According to “Janus”, this lack of hero-worship was a case of “amankun eru re wo. O ni ile lo ti wow a” [If you said that the load on a lame man is not straight, he would answer and tell you that the error is from the base] (LS, 19 June, 1912, 5).<sup>196</sup> This means that the problem arose from deep inside, namely, from the fundamental problem that Lagos does not have a custom of honouring ancestors. However, “Observer” rejected this idea.

On 19 June 1913, the bust of E.W. Blyden was unveiled in Sierra Leone. The *Record* reported the erection of the Blyden Bust in front of Wilberforce Memorial in Sierra Leone (LWR, 12 July 1913, 5); describing it as the first monument set up in Africa to “a negro, erected by both the black and white races” (LWR, 16 August 1913, 3). This appears to have awakened competitive feelings, motivating action to resume the long-delayed memorial movement in Lagos.

The ceremony of the unveiling of the memorial portrait of Blyden took place on 28 February 1914 at the Glover Memorial Hall. Unlike the other memorial ceremonies, not only the European and Christian educated elite attended, but also “all sections of the community”, including large numbers of Muslims (NC, 6 March 1914, 3). The speech, delivered by Sapara Williams, attracted the attention of the Lagos press and it was recorded, in full, in three Lagos newspapers.<sup>197</sup> The importance of the portrait of Blyden was reported by Sapara Williams as follows:

so that future generation may know the man who has written and done so much for the general advancement of his people, the exponent of the true spirit of African nationality and manhood and also taught the people how to **develop on their own lines of thought** and preserve their national custom which are innocent

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<sup>196</sup> I am grateful to Joseph Ayodokun of Tope Consultium (Ibadan, Nigeria) for his assistance in translation.

<sup>197</sup> LS, 11 March 1914, 5; NC, 6 March 1914; NP, 3 March 1914, 8.

and useful (NC, 6 March 1914, 6).

In addition, the speech by Sapara Williams emphasised Blyden's notion of African progress:

Dr. Blyden... has shewn to the world and to every Educated and thinking Native that if we Africans are to play an important role in this worlds [sic] stage we must not place ourselves in a position uncongenial to our environments or inimical to our interest, but that we must go back to the standpoint of manhood of our fathers and not cut loose from our ancestral mooring which unfortunately many of us have done... European learning is excellent and beneficial to an African progress in life but I agree with Dr. Blyden in saying that where that education takes one entirely from the mode of thought of his ancestors in matters inimical to his own interest that education is imperfect and in a measure unprofitable and should be greatly deplored. Every educated African must agree that the surest and safest way towards the development of our fatherland is on the lines laid down by this great African Patriot in his speeches and writings if we are to attain a creditable manhood (NC, 6 March 1914, 6).

#### 4.3.3. Commoditising Memorial: James Johnson Memorial Fund, 1917-1919

Memorial campaigns for Rev. James Johnson between 1917 and 1919 can be seen as an early example of the usage of memory for consumer promotions. With technologies of mass production, the commodification of memories through printed materials, products and films made certain images and narratives widely available to different peoples. This commodification of memories influences the construction of pasts in the minds of people in a certain society; one can access a memory of particular event or person that is embodied by a certain commodity although one has never

actually experienced or known that event/person.<sup>198</sup>

Bishop James Johnson was an evangelist, scholar and translator who departed this life on 18 May 1917. He was born in Sierra Leone to “recaptive” Yoruba parents (Ijebu father and Ijesha mother) around 1836. After graduation from Fourah Bay College in Freetown, he was ordained a pastor of the CMS. In 1874, he moved to Lagos in charge of St. Paul’s Breadfruit Church in Lagos. He was known for his nationalist activities at the time of Anglo-Ijebu War in 1892, and for his opposition to racial discrimination in the CMS (Kopytoff 1965, 289). Upon his death in 1917, the Executive Committee of the Bishop Johnson’s Memorial Fund was organised, and it was resolved that a bronze statue should be erected in a “prominent thoroughfare in Lagos” and a scholarship should be founded (NP, 3 August 1917, 11). However, only a photographic portrait memorial was actually realised.

Two years after his death in 1919, the ceremony of the unveiling of the photographic portrait of James Johnson was carried out at Glover Memorial Hall. The portrait, a representation of the Bishop in his closing years, in dimensions of 45 inches by 32 inches, was purchased with donations from the Women’s James Johnson Memorial Fund. Regarding revenue and expenses of the fund, there is one issue in common with all of the memorial campaigns. It was reported that for this memorial fund: “an amount of £48 was raised. The enlarged portrait was obtained at a cost of £24, and a sum of £8 was spent on obtaining twenty four reduced copies”, which were purchased by friends and admirers of the late Bishop. The balance in hand, £16, was to be augmented and devoted to another form of memorial for Bishop Johnson (NP, 10 January 1919, 8), however, the remaining £16 appears to have been unused.

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<sup>198</sup> The mnemonic potential of the objects such as souvenirs and keepsakes is borrowed from chapter 2 of Thomas Richards (1990) that discusses the role of souvenirs and cemeteries at the time of Queen Victoria’s Golden Jubilee in 1887 (73-118).



If a decent photographic portrait cost around £24 and memorial tablet could be obtained at a cost from 30 shillings, as mentioned previously in footnote 185, then the question that naturally arises is—how was the balance of the donations used in all the other memorial campaigns? The memorial campaigns we have examined so far did not succeed in bringing their ambitious plans fully into being but often collected more than was necessary for the mere erection of a tablet or preparing a portrait. Money subscribed was not always made full use of. However, interestingly, there are no records accusing memorial associations of withholding donations (except for the time of Queen Victoria’s Diamond Jubilee in 1897, as will be shown in Chapter 6). This could be because enthusiasm for certain memorial movements was temporary, or because the amount collected was not recognised as huge and nobody became suspicious of possible fraud by the Memorial Committees.<sup>199</sup>

At the ceremony of the unveiling of the portrait, it was reported that Johnson’s understanding and sympathy for women’s suffrage was mentioned. Henry Carr, then, emphasised Johnson’s memorial portrait as “a symbol of visible unity of spirit in religion, and therefore in all business of life, which was the cry of the desire of the late Bishop for his countrymen and women” (NP, 10 January 1919, 8). However, this unity was not evident in the whole society nor among all religions because donations for this memorial portrait were collected exclusively from Christian women, although at first it was proposed “every woman in Lagos, irrespective of her creed or her religion” should be invited to subscribe to the Women’s James Johnson Memorial Fund.

What is notable about this memorial movement is that commodities, such as

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<sup>199</sup> A similar memorial campaign for James Johnson appeared in Yoruba-English bilingual newspaper in the 1920s. In May 1923, *Eletí Ofe* proclaimed the necessity for memorialisation of Bishop James Johnson. The proposal of a school holiday called “Bishop Johnson’s Day” on 15 May and of a memorial fund to establish a statue and Memorial College were made (Barber 2009a, 6).

calendars with a portrait and a short biography of James Johnson, were sold for 1 shilling (NP, 22 February 1918, 4) (see Plate 1). A pamphlet with a brief account of the life of James Johnson was also published in the Yoruba language by E. A. Akintan<sup>200</sup> of the Christ Church School. It was edited for the “Children of the land” and “Yoruba readers generally” (LS, 23 July 1919, 4). These commodities would have served an important role of disseminating and fixing a certain image of James Johnson, in the same way as commodities and souvenirs with Queen Victoria’s images, produced at the time of Queen Victoria’s Jubilees in England in 1887 and 1897.

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<sup>200</sup> E. Akintunde Akintan (1890-1957) was a notable Yoruba author who was an editor of *Eletì Ofè* (1923-28), a weekly bilingual newspaper.

**Plate 1: Advertisement for Memorial Calendar and Biography of James Johnson**

MESSRS. DADA ADESHIGBIN  
& SONS have for sale at their  
Sales Room at Broad Street,  
BEAUTIFUL CALENDERS  
PORTRAYING THE BEST  
PICTURE & SHORT BIOGRAPHY  
OF  
THE LATE  
**Right Reverend Bishop**  
**James Johnson, D.D.**  
at 1s. each—postage 1d.  
VERY LIMITED COPIES—HALF  
OF WHICH HAVE BEEN  
SOLD OUT.  
Your home needs a perpetual  
remembrance of the  
SAINTED PRELATE.  
Apply in time or you may be  
disappointed.

(NP, 22 February 1918, 4)

#### **4.4. Change in the Forms of Memorialisation**

##### **4.4.1. From Memorial Objects to Memorial Poems**

As we have seen in the previous sections, memorial portraits or tablets resulting from memorial campaigns had become a common means of the memorialisation of charismatic figures and the perpetuation of their memory. In the early twentieth century, there were changes in the format of commemorations that were recorded in the Lagos press. One was the rising practice of inserting memorial (obituary) poems, and the other was the establishment of Memorial Day, as will be discussed in the next part.

From the 1880s, obituaries sometimes appeared in the Lagos newspapers when

prominent figures died. At the turn of the twentieth century, memorial poems or obituary poems commemorating a person's death were inserted by family or close friends of the deceased. These elegiac poems consisted of sentimental narrative verse that often told of the shock of loss, the sense of the absence of the deceased, the story of the demise, and the life story. In 1907, 6-10 poems appeared in both the *Standard* and the *Record*.

One of the first poems to appear in the Lagos press was a memorial poem for Master Dick Blaize, the son of Richard Beale Blaize, a wealthy merchant in Lagos. Master Dick Blaize was born in 1877 and had been studying in England since 1894. On 12 March 1897, he died of bronchitis and pneumonia during a cold winter in England. A week after his death, a poem of 10 stanzas, lamenting the early death of their promising young son, was inserted by the family in the *Standard* (LS, 17 March 1897, 3). The form of this poem was decorative compared with later short poems. Sentences of the first stanza begin with R, I, C, H, A, R, D respectively; while sentences in the last stanza begin with B, L, A, I, Z, E. Some stanzas (second, sixth, seventh and eighth stanza) were written in rhyme. It would be useful to insert the first and the last stanzas of this poem (see Plate 2).<sup>201</sup>

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<sup>201</sup> See Appendix 13 for the whole stanzas of the poem.

**Plate 2: First and Last Stanzas of the Memorial Poem for Master Dick Blaize**

IN MEMORIAM	
A LOVING TRIBUTE TO R. B. B.	
R	Richard art thou gone, ah, gone for ever?
I	Is this the end of all our being—our goal?
C	Ceased that voice, in the spring time of life?
H	Hast thou crossed life's dreary bound so soon?
A	Ah! Lost for aye! alas a sorry thought
R	Relentless Fate! Is this thy stern decree,
D	Dead? Thou fillest a greave untimely dug
B	Beyond this vale of tears there is
L	Life immortal, blissful, unending tearless
A	An entrance to fields celestial Death is
I	In full hope of the resurrection more
Z	Zealously our part in life let us play
E	Ere we are envelopes in a dreadful gloom,

(LS, 17 March 1897, 3)

Acrostic form, in which the initial letter of each line spells out the word, became particularly associated with memorial verse, where the deceased's name stood out from the fabric of the text. Acrostic can also be a mnemonic technique that enables the readers to remember the name in the context. The poem, published in the Lagos press, became the embodiment of the name of the deceased because the newspapers were often preserved for a long time. Memorial acrostics cannot be found between 1897 and 1920, when the *Record* once more inserted a memorial acrostic, which was for Rev. Joseph Seberu Fanimokun (the late principal of the CMS Grammar School) (see Appendix 14) (LWR, 20 March 1920, 6).

Another notable instance of an obituary poem for a great man is that of J. A.

Otonba Payne, who had served as a historian and as Registrar of the Lagos Supreme Court, but was killed by burglars on 20 December 1906. Three months after his death, a 16 stanza poem appeared in the *Standard* (13 February 1907, 3), and seven years later, in 1913, his son inserted a short one-stanza poem, “In Memoriam” in the *Record* (20 December 1913, 4).<sup>202</sup>

Longer poems, with more than 10 stanzas, were written for prominent figures or families of great men like the above-mentioned son of Richard Beale Blaize. These longer poems were often written in rhyme, to demonstrate the relatively high level of education of the writer. But the shorter poems, which began to appear from 1904, were not always written in rhyme. The Notice of short memorial poems in the Lagos newspapers was written in the following form: it started with name of the deceased, date of death, one stanza poem (often quoted from poets) or a phrase from the Bible, and ended with name or pseudonym of writer (see Plate 3). In most cases, short memorial poems were inserted in the press years after the death. This pattern is mainly seen in poems to memorialise women. For instance, when we look at the three poems below, they appeared 5 to 13 years after the death of a loved one. The first poem was inserted 13 years after the death of “beloved Grand mother”, Keziah Ogunbiyi; the second poem was published 10 years after the death of “Beloved wife”, Adeluida Ibironke Ojo; and the third poem was inserted 5 years after the death of “Beloved Mother”, Madam Marian Olasebikan.

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<sup>202</sup> See Appendix 15 for the one-stanza memorial poem for J. A. Otonba Payne. In addition, the photography of J. A. Otonba-Payne’s was placed at the Forester Society Hall in 1913 by the members of the Court “Fount of Hope” no.7789 Ancient Order of Foresters, a Freemason society that establish in 1889 (LS, 24 April 1895, 3; LWR, 20 December 1913,4).

**Plate 3: Memorial Poems between 1909 and 1917**

IN MEMORIAM

In every loving and affectionate remembrance  
of my beloved Grand mother,

KEZIAH OGUNBIYI

all prominent Leader of St. David's Church

Leckie, who receive her "Home Call" at

Lagos on Ash Wednesday 1896

"May each, like thee, depart in peace

To be a glorious guest,

Where the wicked cease from troubling,

And the weary are at rest."

EMMIE.

(LS, 3 March 1909, 4)<sup>203</sup>

IN EVER LOVING MEMORY OF

My BELOVED WIFE

ADELUIDA IBIRONKE OJO

Who departed this life 28<sup>th</sup> April 1907.

"Thou art gone but not forgotten

Never shall thy Memory fade

Pleasant thoughts shall ever linger

Round the spot where thou art laid."

ALAO.

(LWR, 5 May 1917, 4)

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<sup>203</sup> This Memorial poem quotes one verse from "Burial Hymn" written by Henry Hart Milman (1791–1868), English ecclesiast and historian. Several other memorial poems inserted in the Lagos newspaper quoted different verses from Milman's "Burial Hymn". For instance, see memorial poems for Sarah Adeyanju George and Rosannah Bangbele Coker (NP, 11 December 1914; 6; LS, 18 August 1915, 7).

IN MEMORIAM.  
 IN affectionate remembrance of our dearly  
 Beloved Mother  
 MADAM MARIAN QLAŞEBIKAN VIDAL  
 Who fell asleep in Christ Jesus on the 10<sup>th</sup> August, 1912.  
 She silently passed to the Sea of Eternity  
 The Captains and the Things depart  
 Still stands thine Everlasting arm  
 And Thy years have no end.  
 E. FQLARIN VIDAL  
 AND FAMILY.

(NP, 10 August 1917, 8)

In Lagos, while attempting to record their own history by honouring great men through memorial campaigns, there grew another custom of memorialising family and friends. Publishing poems in newspapers, namely, in society's notice boards, was an accessible way of memorialising, available to less prominent members of society. Between 1890 and 1920, in order to insert one memorial advertisement (memorial poem or death notice), family or friends of the deceased paid between 4 and 15 shillings.<sup>204</sup> It was an economical and effective tool for the educated elite to acknowledge the death of their loved ones. It also materialised the memory of the deceased because the remaining family could preserve the newspaper containing the memorial poem. In Britain and America, obituaries in newspapers were predominantly for males (Demoor 2005, 261-63). The same phenomenon can be seen in obituary articles that appeared in the

<sup>204</sup> In 1892, the *Lagos Weekly Record* charged 15 shillings for a half column advertisement, 4 shillings for advertisement under twelve lines (one insertion) and 6 pence for every additional line. In 1916 the *Nigerian Pioneer* set a price of 5 shillings for advertisements under twelve lines (one insertion), of 6 pence for every additional line and of 2 shillings 5 pence for birth, death or marriage notices. In 1920, the *Lagos Weekly Record* charged from 1 shilling to 2 shilling 6 pence for one insertion of advertisement between 20 and 50 words (LWR, 13 March 1920, 8). Charges for inserting advertisements do not always appear on the paper as the rates were sometimes furnished on application.



Lagos newspapers; however, regarding memorial poems inserted by both female and male readers, there were more of those expressing love for wives and mothers, rather than for husbands and fathers. This shows, nevertheless, that the Lagos press became a medium not only for memorialisation of great men of society, but also for less prominent men and women.

#### 4.4.2. Memorial Days

At the beginning of the twentieth century, there was one more change in the form of memorialisation; the custom of celebrating Memorial Days was initiated. A Memorial Day is categorised as the fourth type of media of social memory, as discussed in Peter Burke (1989), namely, acts of commemoration—not only activities of raising funds for memorialisation, as examined in section 2 and 3, but also of celebrating the life of a particular individual, such as Agbebi Day. Anniversaries and commemoration days relating to Britain—such as Queen Victoria’s birthday, Queen Victoria’s Jubilees and Empire Day, to be discussed in Chapter 6—had been carried out since the mid nineteenth century in Lagos, but from the beginning of the twentieth century, attempts at establishing Memorial Day for commemorating prominent figures of their own society began.

In August 1907, the Native Baptist Church of Lagos resolved to set up 11 October as “Agbebi Day” (LS, 14 August 1907, 3), and the Agbebi Day Celebration Committee was organised.<sup>205</sup> The object of Agbebi Day was (1) “to inculcate race pride, pureness

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<sup>205</sup> The Agbebi Day Celebration Committee consisted of the educated elite such as C. A. Sapara Williams (Hon. Patron), S. Alfred Coker (Vice Patron), Thomas Ige George (President), W. T. G. Lawson (Vice President), T. Lloyd Harrison (Treasure), Dr. Ayodeji Oyejola (Hon. Secretary), Alexander M. Williams, S. S. Davies, E. A. T. A. Johnson, A. Cole, C. O. Leigh, C. Collins Cole, J. T. Williams. Deniys Agbebi, O. Ojola and N. Adolphus William.

of motives, honesty of purpose, unselfish aims, upright conduct, moral excellence and devotion to duty.” (2) “to raise the lever and pump out the almighty dollar for the interest of Dr. Agbebi’s evangelistic efforts in ‘regions beyond’ Lagos” (LWR, 23 October 1907, 6).

The celebration of “Agbebi Day” was subsidised by the Native Baptist Church, and interestingly, this memorial day was established while Mojola Agbebi (1860–1917) was alive. The Committee held a “Social Evening” on 11 October 1907 at 7 pm, at the Baptist Chapel. The programme for the social evening included “the performance of Feats in Hypnotism and Tricks in Magic, in a chapel on the race grounds” and a photograph-taking event (LWR, 23 October 1907, 6). The Committee sent the invitation cards to people in Lagos. The advertisement of the “Agbebi Day” photograph-taking event appeared in the *Standard* (see Plate 4).

**Plate 4: Agbebi Day Advertisement**



**"AGBEBI DAY."**  
**Lovers! Lovers! Lovers!**  
This is decidedly your chance  
On "Agbebi Day" October 11 the  
TAQUTA PHOTOGRAPHER  
will visit Lagos and take his  
stand by the Chapel on the Race  
Grounds taking portraits and putting  
them in attractive brooches or lockets  
and handing them to people in Five  
Minutes; all for the sum of 26. This is  
the latest photographic wonder in the  
world.  
Come and see yourself.

(LS, 9 October 1907, 1)

However, this scheme for a memorial day did not escape severe criticism. A letter under the pseudonym “Socrates” to the *Standard* criticised the programme of Agbebi Day, especially the “photographing of lovers” event, which was targeted as

meaningless. He suggested that it seemed “rather strange that the memory of such a good and pious creature as the late Agbebi should be marred by advertising for the assemblage of a motley crowd of illicit lovers to take their stand by a chapel on the Race Course for the purpose of being photographed” (LS, 2 October 1907, 7).<sup>206</sup> Another letter to the *Record* in the pseudonym “Okete”, who received an invitation card issued for celebrating “Agbebi Day”, also criticised the programme of the day as having nothing to do with “raising money to facilitate and strengthen Dr. Agbebi’s evangelistic efforts in regions beyond Lagos” nor inculcating “race pride”, which was supposed to be an aim and a desideratum of the Memorial Committee. Instead of juggling and magic, he suggested, the programme should include the reading of Agbebi’s works. The letter ended with the following question: “It is puzzling how Agbebi could have allowed his name to be made use of so injudiciously. Is it not a fact that the object of Agbebi Day is to commemorate the name of Agbebi?” (LWR, 23 October 1907, 6)

Despite the hopes of some promoters of making Agbebi Day an occasion of meaningful events to educate attendants, such as public lectures or readings on his life and works, the first Agbebi Day ended as a festivity. The anniversary continued for at least a few years in Lagos, though the detailed programme of the Day is not found in Lagos newspapers (LWR, 16 October 1909, 3).<sup>207</sup> What is more, Agbebi was recognised as “the personification of the African Personality” in the United States, and

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<sup>206</sup> The writer of the latter described Agbebi as “late” despite the fact that Agbebi died in 1917 and was still alive at the time of 1907. This would be because the writer misunderstood that Agbebi had already passed away. In addition, this would be also because memorialising both living and dead people was recognised as similarly important or the boundary of living and dead was obscure. Not only the deceased were memorialised in obituaries and memorial poems, but living people were also honoured in the Lagos newspapers, such as in the column of “Portrait Gallery” in the *Lagos Standard*.

<sup>207</sup> It was reported in the article on “Dedication of Araromi chapel” that in the ceremony, Agbebi “said that though “Agbebi Day” is not at present distinctively observed owing to the distance, yet members of the Committee celebration render much assistance from year to year” (LWR, 16 October 1909, 3).

the Men's Sunday Club of Yonkers observed 11 October 1911 as "Agbebi Day" for a celebration of the African race (Akiwowo 1965, 136).<sup>208</sup>

#### 4.5. Conclusion

So far, this chapter has examined seven memorial movements in colonial Lagos between 1880 and 1920—T. B. Macaulay Memorial Association, Dr. N. T. King Memorial Fund, Glover Memorial Fund, Lady Denton Memorial, Anna Sophia Williams Memorial, Edward Wilmot Blyden Memorial Committee, James Johnson Memorial Fund—as well as several memorial poems and Agbebi Memorial Day in the early twentieth century. It was difficult for memorial associations to fully bring their plans to fruition due to lack of funds, and not a single bronze statue was established during this period in Lagos. However, the promoters of the campaigns did not stop proposing ambitious and optimistic plans to memorialise "worthy" people in society. This was because recording "Footprints on the sands of Time"<sup>209</sup> (LO, 2 & 16 July 1885, 2), the act of recording their "own history", was recognised as essential for the progress of society, which the Lagos educated elite aimed at achieving. It was believed that, without the shared past, there would be no social solidarity, which was necessary

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<sup>208</sup> Another example of Memorial Day would be the beginning of Mother's Day. The proposal for making the second Sunday in May Mother's Day was made by Mojola Agbebi in 1911 and this observance was initiated from the same year (LWR, 18 March 1911, 3). On the first Mother's day, it was reported that "Many people visited their mothers' graves as a token of respectful reverence and remembrance [sic]... A feature of the Sunday observance was striking sermons, addresses and prayers, some of which made tears flow from aged people's eyes, the presentation of gifts to living mothers, and thanks-offerings in memory of deceased ones, the latter of which brough substantial contributions to some churches" (LWR, 20 May 1911, 3).

<sup>209</sup> "Footprints on the sands of time" is a phrase from a poem titled "A Psalm of Life" by American writer Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807-1882), describing the mark that great individuals leave on history. The editor of the *Lagos Observer* cited this phrase in the article on the lamentable failure of memorial campaigns in Lagos (2 & 16 July 1885, 2).

for the development of “nation”.

Despite the fact that memorial campaigns often resulted in failure, the deceased were, nonetheless, memorialised in the sense that the importance of their lives was publicised through the press reports, which the educated elite preserved for a long time in their personal libraries. People in Lagos would sometimes launch campaigns and hold meetings in order to be recorded in the newspapers. The memorialisation of the deceased was partly achieved once the proposal for the memorial campaign, which expressed patriotic zeal to record the life of the deceased, had been reported in the Lagos press, notwithstanding the result of the campaign.

Memorialisation in the newspapers, such as biographies, obituaries, and memorial poems; and other forms of memorialisation, such as ceremonies and material representations of memory, for example, establishing memorial tablets and portraits; complemented each other, because ceremonies and other kinds of material memorialisation were fixed in permanent form once they were reported in the newspapers, which were recognised as containers or carriers of memories of certain events or people.

Early colonial Lagos has been described as a stratified and divided society. However, this chapter has demonstrated the efforts of the educated elite to share their history with other sections of society by adopting Western modes of memorialisation, while at the same time, relating it to their own Yoruba tradition. The commemorative associations examined in this chapter can be seen as attempts to make a history of their own, and to share this history with illiterate and partly-literate people by giving charismatic figures a visual form, such as portraits and tablets. In addition, the practice of publishing memorial poems shows that memorialisation in the Lagos press became a medium not only for “big men and women” of society, but also for the memorialisation

of less prominent individuals.

It would appear that each memorial campaign only benefited a particular section of society, or even just the family of the person who was memorialised, and there was also a possibility of fraud in the usage of donations. Despite that, as discussed, newspaper descriptions of commemorative associations were discussed in connection with public interests, such as the progress of society, unity of the people, or for retaining racial pride; and the importance of memorial campaigns was justified in a similar context. The Lagos press encouraged memorial movements by emphasising that memorialisation was not only a custom of Western countries, but had also been common practice in Yorubaland.

For Halbwachs, memory was socially constructed and present-oriented, focussing on instances where the images and concerns of the present impinged on memories of individuals as well as of a certain community; whereas, what we have seen from this chapter suggests that memorialisation in the Lagos newspapers was reported in a future-oriented tone. The memorial campaigns were the educated elite's conscious projects for constructing future society, and suggesting ways in which Lagos society should progress.

The next chapter will examine newspaper descriptions of industrial and agricultural associations, and educational institutes, and elucidate the growing interests of the Lagos press in agriculture and industry.

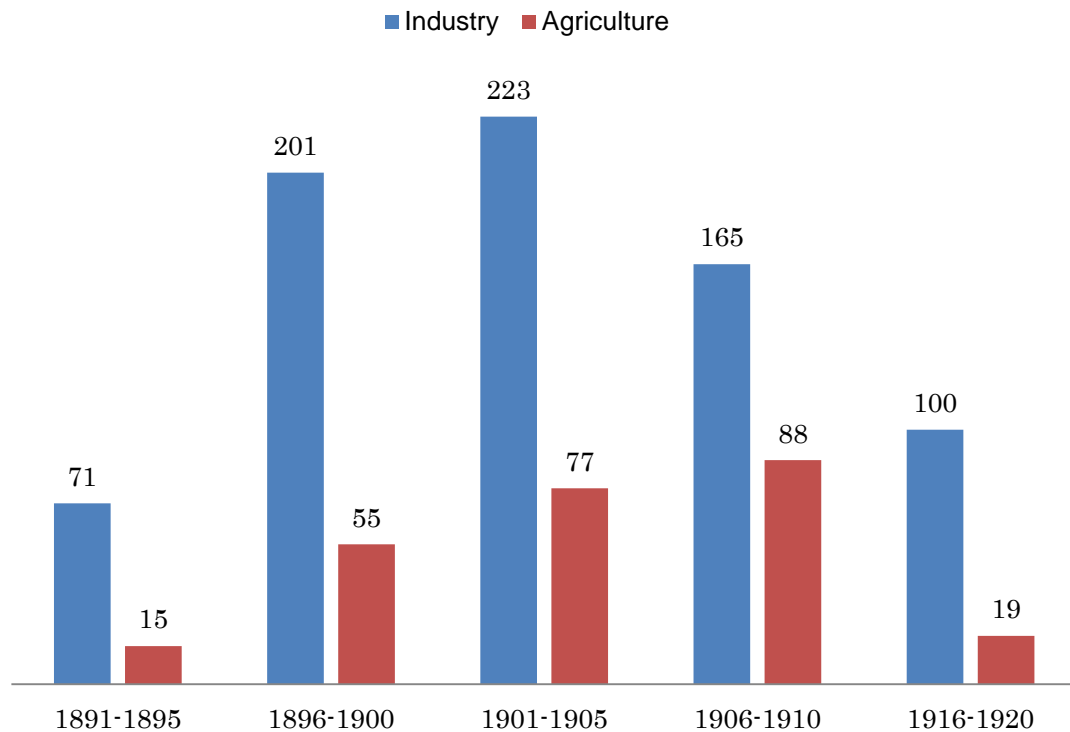
## **CHAPTER 5**

### **“NATURAL” OCCUPATIONS FOR THE PROGRESS OF SOCIETY: AGRICULTURE AND INDUSTRY IN LAGOS NEWSPAPERS**

#### **5.1. Introduction**

Throughout the nineteenth century, Lagos, as the principal slave trade port, was predominantly a commercial community and, in the twentieth century, it became a centre for exporting “legitimate” products such as rubber, cotton, palm oil, palm kernel and cocoa. While the Lagos press had been publishing news on trade and commerce, at the end of the nineteenth century it began to devote more and more space to debates on the necessity for traditional industries such as blacksmithing, carpentry, joinery, and leather-working. From the beginning of the twentieth century, it also focused on agriculture. Figure 1 is a contents analysis of the *Lagos Weekly Record* showing the frequency of the terms “industry” and “agriculture”. The term “industry” increased between 1896 and 1905, and the term “agriculture” increased regularly between 1896 and 1910.

**Figure 1: Frequency of the Terms “Industry” and “Agriculture” in the *Lagos Weekly Record* between 1891 and 1920 (except for 1913-15)**



[Source: World Newspaper Archive, African Newspapers Collection. Contents Analysis carried out by the Author]

This chapter has two aims. The first is to elucidate the background of the increasing attention of the press to industrial and agricultural occupations. It has been explained, in the previous historical literature, that severe competition with European firms at the turn of the twentieth century forced African merchants to search for alternative earning opportunities and to pay more attention to agriculture and industry (Berry 1975; Hopkins 1978). African merchants were often said to have been drawn into a whirlpool of severe commercial competition. However, examination of newspaper discourse in this chapter shows the initiative of the African people, who, with the support of the press, strove to encourage industrial education and the production of cash crops for the progress of their own society. Agriculture and industry



were described as essential means of achieving economic gain, as well as “moral” advantage, to encourage “spiritual independence” and the unity of the “nation” and the colony. There may have been economic pressure to turn to agriculture and industry, but the educated elite linked this to their larger project of civilisation and self-sufficiency as a race/nation and recognised it as a cultural/political as well as an economic project. The second aim of this chapter is to examine newspaper descriptions of industrial and agricultural associations established by the educated elite in early colonial Lagos. The agrarian and industrial associations in 1880-1920 southern Nigeria have received passing notice as forerunners of trade unions or indigenous marketing co-operatives in the previous research (Lloyd 1953; Berry 1975; Adeyeye 1978; Hopkins 1978; Ahwireng-Obeng 1984; Adenijia 1986). The examination in this chapter will show the growing interest in these associations, which received encouragement from the Lagos press, which described them as economic and “moral” benefits for Lagos society. To illustrate my argument, this chapter first examines newspaper discourse on industry, industrial education, and artisanal associations in 1880-1920 south western Nigeria, and then, the second section of this chapter discusses the descriptions of agriculture and agrarian associations.

## **5.2. The Dignity of Artisans**

### **5.2.1. Lack of Skilled Artisans and the Mechanic Association**

In terms of employment, commerce was by far the most important sector of Lagos’ economy throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth century. As Figure 2 and 3 indicate, out of a working population of 26,226 in Lagos municipal area in 1881,

42.1% of people were directly engaged in commerce;<sup>210</sup> and out of a working population of 46,640 in 1911, the number of those directly employed in commerce amounted to 48.3% (Hopkins 1964, 25 & 418).<sup>211</sup> Since farmers and fishermen supplemented their incomes with small scale trading, it would be reasonable to say that more than a half of the population of Lagos engaged in some kind of commercial activity by the 1880s. As a result of this inclination to commerce, there was a consistent shortage of skilled artisans, such as carpenters, masons, sawyers, coopers, blacksmiths, tailors, mechanics, etc. They remained the minority in the community throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth century.<sup>212</sup> The *Annual Report of Lagos 1891* indicates that only 7.8% (5,522) of the total “Native” working population (70,811) were artisans including apprentices, while 42.7% (30,250) were engaged in commerce,<sup>213</sup> and in 1911, out of the total working population of Lagos and its suburbs (46,640), only 3.3% (1,552) were carpenters and apprentices, 2.3% (1,068) were tailors and 1.5% (711) were bricklayers and apprentices (see Figure 3) (Hopkins 1964, 418). Although the actual

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<sup>210</sup> The *Eagles and Lagos Critic* recorded that much more percentage of population engaged in commerce in 1881 than Hopkins (1964) mentions. It was reported that Sir Alfred Moloney, Governor of Lagos, mentioned at the ceremony of Queen Victoria’s Golden Jubilee that “in 1881 there were 19,450 males (including male children) and out of these no less than 11,049 or nearly 57% were described as Merchants, Traders, Agents, Clerks and Shopmen” (E&LC, July 1887, 3).

<sup>211</sup> The total population of Lagos in 1881 is recorded as 37,452, and 1911 is recorded as 73,766 (Hopkins 1964, 25 & 418).

<sup>212</sup> Unskilled manual labourers were also in short supply. From the mid-nineteenth century, the demand for labour gradually increased as a result of the inauguration of public works, such as the construction of bridges and the embankment of the Marina, and the scarcity of manual labourers continued into the early twentieth century. “In 1881, the census recorded that there were 2,357 labourers in Lagos, which was equivalent to 9% of the total occupied population; thirty years later, in 1911, the number had reached 6,388 or 13.7% of the total occupied population... Nevertheless, demand continued to exceed supply. In 1903 the government admitted that labour was still very scarce in Lagos, and in 1909 the Colonial Office even gave serious consideration to the possibility of importing Indian Labour into West Africa” (Hopkins 1966b, 147).

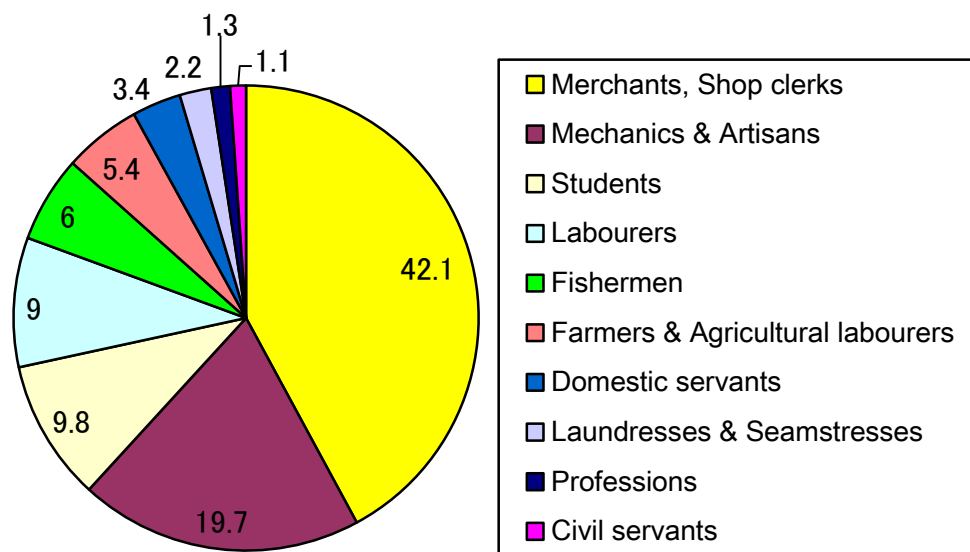
<sup>213</sup> The report accounts the total population of “Native” in Lagos and its suburbs as 85,457. See Appendix 16 for 80 different occupations and their distribution.

numbers vary according to the sources,<sup>214</sup> this commerce-oriented occupational structure continued to the early twentieth century.

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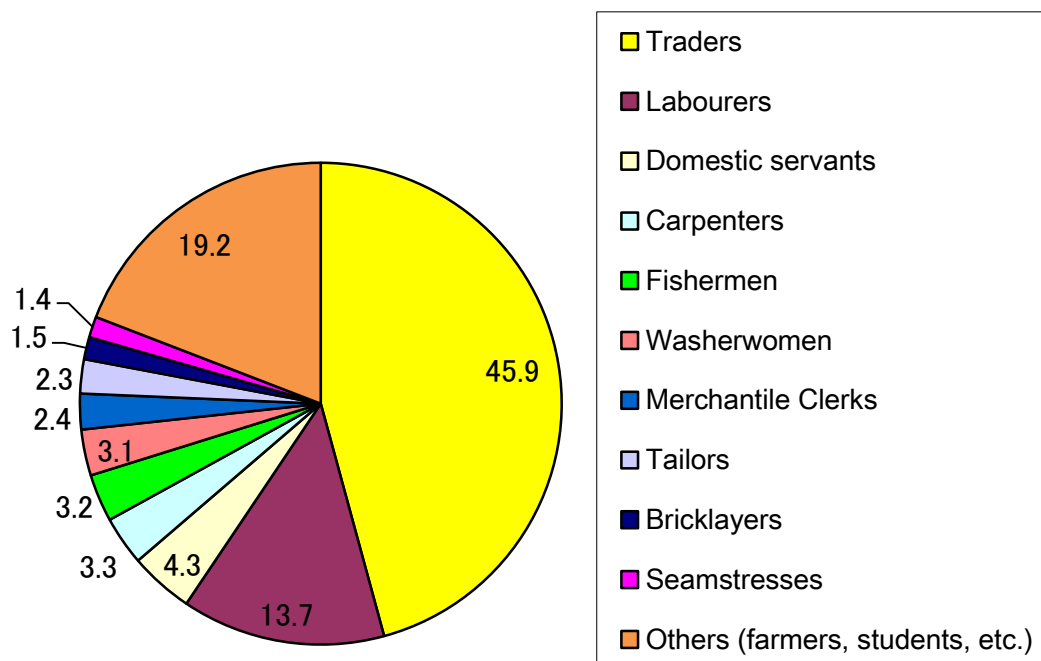
<sup>214</sup> According to Cole (1975), the census of Lagos Colony in 1881 shows that out of 37,458, total population, 29.5% (11,049) engaged in commerce as merchants, traders, agents, clerks and shopmen, while 13.8% (5,173) engaged in craftwork as tradesmen, mechanics, manufacturers and artisans (45). However, the *Annual Report of Lagos 1881* estimates a total population of Lagos as 75,270 (male 37,665; female 37,605).

**Figure 2: Occupational Structure of Lagos Town, 1881 [%]**



[Source: Census of the Settlement of Lagos 1881]

**Figure 3: Occupational Structure of Lagos Municipal, 1911 [%]**



[Source: Census of the Colony of South Nigeria 1911]

Skilled labourers had been brought from Freetown, Cape Coast, or Accra from the 1850s to compensate for the shortage of the labour force, and the government as well as individuals had to import “prefabricated houses” and furniture from England and Germany for the purpose of solving inadequate supply of building materials such as “well-made cheap bricks” (Brown 1964, 119). In 1886, a special correspondent of the *Lagos Observer* lamented the incompetence of local artisans which made him live in “an English house, in Africa, and surrounded by English furniture and luxuries” and “neither the very pen in my hand nor the table, or lamp that gives me light, or chair, or any of the things by which I am surrounded was made here” (19 June 1886, 2). In Lagos newspapers of the late nineteenth century, this shortage and the poor quality of skilled artisans was described as a sincerely urgent problem since it would leave people “to the mercy of foreign artisans” and result in retarding “social progress” and “national independence” (LO, 31 August 1882, 2; 7 May 1887, 2).

As a solution to this problem, artisanal associations were encouraged under the slogan of “vindicating labours for the progress of society”. Since the 1870s, convivial associations for labourers existed in Lagos,<sup>215</sup> but it was in the 1880s when Lagos witnessed several associations which can be regarded as the forerunners of trade unions. One of the first recorded artisanal unions is the Mechanics Mutual Aid Provident and Improvement Association which was organised in 1883.<sup>216</sup> The Association adopted the slogan of “vindicating dignity of Mechanic for the progress of society”. The following

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<sup>215</sup> Brown (1964) notes that the mechanics and labourers in Lagos formed clubs by 1872 and enjoyed drinking and dancing on Sunday, and “the hall for one of the clubs was located next to the Wesleyan Chapel at Tinubu Square” (114-115).

<sup>216</sup> The educated elite who supported this association were as follows: J. S. Leigh and J. H. Hamilton as the President and the Secretary of the Association respectively, Revs. Crowther, I. Oluwole, James Johnson, S. P. Johnson, and Messrs W. T. G. Lawson, J. A. Payne, J. Priddy, W. Baxfield, J. P. Haastrup, E. S. Willoughby, N. T. Nelson, Deigh, E. H. Henly, J. A. Vaughan, J. A. Lisboa, A. C. Willoughby, T. G. Hoare and J. J. Thomas (E&LC, 28 July 1883, 4; 29 March 1884, 3; LO, 19 June 1884, 3; 5 March 1885, 3).

is a report of this Mechanic Association's meeting on 18 July 1883. The proceedings were held in Yoruba language and the *Lagos Times* reported the meeting combining some Yoruba words which might attract additional readers who read Yoruba.

It is surely lamentable that we have no 'big men' [who are artisans] to set us example, in Lagos: and when Mr. Haastrup said 'Agba o si, ilu baje, Bale ku, ile d'ahoro' [The elders not around, the town goes bad. The head of the house dies, and the house became empty] and exclaimed dolefully 'Agba o si l'eko o!' many were forced to say Gasikia! [Truth!] ...He asked them to pay attention to the rear, and seek encouragement from this proverb—'Bi omode subu a wo iwaju, b'agba ba subu a wo ehin' [If a child falls down, they carry on walking. If it is an adult, they look back to find the reason]. It is a pity that things are in such a state among us, that we cannot look up to our superiors for examples (8 August 1883, 2).<sup>217</sup>

At the first anniversary meeting, it was reported that "every one of the speakers dwelt on the immense advantage and usefulness accruing from Mechanics not only in Lagos but in every civilized portion of the globe, and equally deprecated the unintelligible notion entertained by some of the members of the association who it appears are *ashamed* of their profession or calling" (E&LC, 29 March 1884, 2). The initiators of the Mechanic Association believed that mechanics "need to be supported, directed and advised" as "no clerk is independent; with a mechanic it is different" (LO, 19 June 1884, 3; 5 March 1885, 3).

They also organised an entertainment society, called the "Lagos Mechanic Amateur Dramatic Association", and gave the first entertainment at the Phoenix Hall on Tinubu Square on 6 June 1884, under the patronage of J. A. Payne. The entertainment consisted of "Chinese dance and Pyramids, Recitation and Pantomime" (E&LC, 28 June

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<sup>217</sup> Translations inside brackets were inserted by author. I am grateful to Shola Adenekan for assisting me with the translation.

1884, 4). Their performance did not satisfy the expectations of the audiences and no subsequent performance was conducted. According to a letter under a pseudonym “Remeses”, Chinese dance and pyramids were “novel and amusing”, though a play titled “‘The 4O’Clock Steamer’ was very tedious”, the recitation on by S. A. Johnson was “ill-advised”, and for the pantomime, he could relish “it in a very limited degree”. Nevertheless, “Remeses” positively argued:

It is decidedly a good sign now that trade is dull, that the Mechanics are rising up like men and coming up to vindicate the dignity of their profession. May it be that this amateur treat is not their last. They need to be supported, directed and advised; no people have ever yet towered so high as not to want these things. Take away Mechanics, and where is civilization? (LO, 19 June 1884, 3)

The Mechanics Mutual Aid Provident and Improvement Association continued to function at least until 1897 (Peil 1991, 78), despite the fact that they suffered constant arrears for monthly and quarterly subscriptions which obliged the Committee of the Mechanic Association to insert a following notice in the newspaper in order to encourage payment from its members (Plate 5).

**Plate 5: Notice for the members of the Mechanic Mutual Aid Provident and Improvement Association**

<p style="text-align: center;">NOTICE</p> <p>The Mechanics Mutual Aid Provident and Improvement Association</p> <p>Members in <i>arrears</i> for monthly and quarterly Subscriptions due to the above Association, are hereby informed and notified that unless such dues are paid up in full on or before the 6<sup>th</sup> day of October next, the names of all such members shall be struck off from the rolls of the Association; and they shall cease to be members thereof and consequently forfeit all rights, privileges, and benefits of the said Association from the above date.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">JAS. HERMEZ HAMILTON, Hon. Secretary.</p> <p>Lagos, 25<sup>th</sup> July, 1884.</p>
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(E&LC, 26 July 1884, 4).

#### 5.2.2. Industrial and Technical Education

In addition to the encouragement of artisanal associations, Lagos newspapers urged the introduction of industrial and technical education, which was “a great desideratum” since manual labour was the “essential” factor in the building up of every “nation or community” (LS, 25 September 1907, 5). The CMS provided an agricultural and industrial training from 1851 in Abeokuta, but this was on a small scale (Ajayi 1963, 519; Ajayi [1965] 1969a, 156).<sup>218</sup> Special schools for “an adequate instruction to be given in carpentry, joinery, smithy, masonry[sic], &c.” which compel the pupils to

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<sup>218</sup> CMS Abeokuta Industrial Institution established in 1851 gave instructions on collecting and cleaning cotton for export, “brickmaking, carpentry, and printing” (Ajayi 1963, 519). However, it never succeeded in exporting (Webster 1963b, 422). Another example of missionary industrial training was Agbowo Industrial Mission in 1908. Mojola Agbebi was influenced by the African Institute established in 1890 at Colwyn Bay, North Wales, established by Rev. William Hughes, returned missionary from the Congo. This Institute collected students from Africa offering them religious instruction and industrial training between 1890 and 1911 (Adenijia 1986, 45). Agbowo Industrial Mission in Ijebu conducted J. E. Ricketts and Mojola Agbebi and taught farming, carpentry building, and machine construction (LWR, 25 April 1908, 6).



“serve reasonable periods of apprenticeship” were required in Lagos because apart from “what is done by Brazilian workmen, the knowledge generally displayed in the community... is very low and [shows] vulgar standards of workmanship” (LWR, 29 October 1898, 4). The press repeated the following phrase: “The working classes are the real, the rest are ornamental, to any community” (LO, 1 & 15 January 1887, 2) and encouraged the youths to take up skilled labour and to sweep away the widely shared disinclination to artisanal trades. The youth’s tendency to the “High Collars and Neckties” white-collar occupations was described as a lamentable situation (LS, 12 October 1910, 5-6), because book learning of “Latin and Greek and Algebra, cannot administer to the cravings of an empty stomach” (LO, 7 May 1887, 2). Moreover, as we will see below, encouraging the artisanal calling and education was represented to have moral advantages of regaining independence, public-spiritedness, and self-respect as an “African”.

The first initiative to establish a vocational school in Lagos was taken by the Britain based “Rebecca Hussey Slave Charity”, with the inauguration of the Rebecca Hussey Slave Charity Institution in August 1882. This charity was established under the last will of Miss Rebecca Hussey, a daughter of Baronet Sir Thomas Hussey of Lincolnshire, who died on 22 April 1714 in London. She bequeathed £1,000 to the “the redemption of slaves... or else to the easement of their slavery”, but her will was almost forgotten and was left for 150 years when this charitable provision had increased to £23,481 “by accumulated interest”. It was in 1872 when London Trustees decided that the annual interest should be allocated between St. Helena and Lagos. Lagos trustees were composed of Surgeon-Major Frank Simpson (Assistant Colonial Secretary), James P. L. Davies, A. H. Porter, C. Foresythe (Secretary), Charles J. George and N. T. King (Payne 1881, 51). Lagos Trustees were directed to expend only the interest of the Lagos

share of the Fund, which yielded about £376 a year. With this fund, the Lagos trustees run the Rebecca Hussey Slave Charity Institution, where the boys who were ex-slaves found in asylums could receive elementary education as well as industrial training, such as “carpentry, bricklaying, coopering, smithing [sic] and other practical mechanical arts” by the “native artisans” (LO, 31 August 1882, 2).<sup>219</sup> According to the report by C. Foresythe, a secretary of the institution in 1882, there were “15 boys in the Institution receiving elementary education” at its opening (ibid, 3). The number of pupils increased to 50 in 1899 with the scheme of broadening the conditions for application from only “slave boys” to those of “free born”. One hammer, which received a prize in a school exhibition, was sent to Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, then the Colonial Secretary in Britain. It was proudly reported that there was “no doubt the Colonial Minister will use [it] for nailing some things in his house”! (LS, 12 April 1899, 5). Despite high expectations toward this institute from the society the maintenance of the Institution had been beset by difficulties, such as misappropriation of supplies, inability to secure students or teachers, and the prejudice of its being originally a place solely for “escaped slave boys”. The *Lagos Times* admitted “though there are undoubtedly multitudes of slave boys in the Interior who desire their liberty and would profit by the advantages the Institution offers, it is not easy for them to effect their escape and travel to the Coast” (13 September 1882, 2). In 1906, the headquarters in Britain constituted the African Fund in lieu of the Lagos Fund and the St. Helena Fund. Along with this re-organisation, it was resolved to abolish the Rebecca Hussey Institution in Lagos because the problem of slavery had almost been solved (Brown 1964, 224-246; LS, 13 October 1897, 3; LWR,

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<sup>219</sup> Assistant blacksmiths, assistant schoolmasters, teachers and bookkeepers, were employed with the salary of £48, £60, and £100 per annum respectively (LS, 1 May 1901, 5; 5 June 1901, 5; 18 June 1902, 2).

30 June 1906, 4; 14 July 1906, 7).<sup>220</sup> Despite what the press called the “deplorable” extinction of the Rebecca Hussey Charity Institution, their ambition of promoting industrial education had succeeded<sup>221</sup> and subsequently two vocational education institutions were inaugurated by the good will of “natives”. These were Isaac A. Cole’s Technological Institution in Lagos and the Blaize’s Memorial Industrial Institute in Abeokuta, which were established in 1905 and 1908 respectively.

At the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century there were governmental apprenticeship systems in the Department of Railway, Marine and Public Works as well as several individually offered vocational trainings, such as Herbert Macaulay’s Training Institute for civil engineering, surveying and architecture and R. K. George’s the Tailoring Cutting Academy.<sup>222</sup> In September 1905, the first successful technological institute was established by a “native” in Lagos, Isaac A. Cole (1862-?). The detail of his background is not easy to trace, but Cole started his business as a builder and contractor in 1883 (Macmillan [1920] 1968, 110-111) and became one

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<sup>220</sup> The donation of £100 was made to the Freed Slaves Home in Bornu in 1907 and annually £100 was given to the Abeokuta Industrial Institute between 1909 and 1936. The headquarters of the “Charity of Rebecca Hussey for Africans” still exist in London in 2009 and contribute to the “promotion of Christian religion, relief of poverty and ignorance, aiding self help projects” in the following 10 countries: Botswana, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, with the average annual expenditure of £11,977 in 2003-2007 (Charity Commission 2009; Lugard Papers, MSS Brit. Emp. S. 71: Slavery and the Liquor Traffic, ff 107-111; CMS (Y) 2/4/2; CMS (Y) 2/1/52).

<sup>221</sup> Five years after the extinction of the Hussey Charity Institution, the “scheme for the Hussey Exhibition” was proposed in order to “bring to remembrance the useful end which the Hussey Institution served in the way of teaching trades and handicrafts, and of which the Native has been wilfully deprived for reasons that have still to be set forth” (LWR, 20 August 1910, 3).

<sup>222</sup> On his speech at the Agricultural Show in 1911, the Governor of Southern Nigeria, Sir Walter Egerton (1858-1947: Governor of Lagos 1904-1906, Governor of Southern Nigeria 1906-1907 and 1907-1912), mentioned technical schools in several governmental departments (NC, 20 January 1911, 2 & 7). For the government Agricultural Apprentice Scheme, see (LS, 16 November 1898, 3). The *Lagos Standard* printed the notice of the “Training in Science & Art” by Herbert Macaulay which offered “Professional instruction in civil engineering, surveying, architecture... for a term of three years of five years” (15 March 1899, 6) and the Tailoring Cutting Academy by R. K. George with the tuition fee of £1.1.0 for one month and £15.15.0 for 18 months (24 October 1900, 5).

of the initiators to systemise vocational training in traditional society which was run on the apprenticeship system.<sup>223</sup> The notices in the Lagos newspapers inform us that he was recognised as a “self made man” and a “leading mechanic”, who worked as a building contractor as well as a funeral undertaker “throughout Lagos, Abeokuta, Ibadan and other Hinterland countries” (NC, 6 May 1910, 2; LS, 19 January 1916, 8). In 1910, it was reported that there were 80 apprentices and 15 journeymen in Cole’s institute (NC, 6 May 1910, 2). They were reported to be disciplined in a way “not far from that of a military School”, however, there was a convivial association called the Jolly Jenkins Friendly Society for the boys to enjoy their pastime at balls, plays, and athletic sports (LS, 1 December 1909, 6; LWR, 27 December 1913, 4). The eligible boys, at its inauguration, were only “Mohammedan or Pagan” Africans but it expanded the apprentices to include Christian boys in 1910. The *Lagos Standard* praised the encouraging fact that the majority of the 65 youths in the institute were “recruited from the educated or Christian elements in the community” as it was rare to find “the educated or Christian youth” eager to follow industrial or manual callings. The success of Cole’s work was reported to be “useful” for the community because it proved that “the pursuit of an industrial calling” could provide people not only wealth but also “respect and honour as well” (LS, 25 September 1907, 5). Despite its small scale, confining its function to teaching only carpentry and joinery, Cole’s institution was introduced in newspapers as an exceedingly rare example of the “exhibition of individual native energy” and the only institution in Lagos that was “owned and

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<sup>223</sup> According to Fafunwa (1974), there were three types of vocational training in Nigeria. The first was agricultural education, farming, fishing and veterinary science such as animal care and animal rearing; the second was trades and crafts, weaving (baskets and cloth), smithing, hunting, carving, sculpturing, carpentry, building, barbering, drumming, pottery-making, leather-working, dyeing; and the third is professions, doctors, priests, witch doctors, civil servants, village heads, chiefs and kings, and so on (30).

managed by a Native” without the help of European missionaries or government subsidy (LS, 25 September 1907, 4-5). Cole’s Technological Institute was described as not only an educational facility but a monument of I. A. Cole, “self-made man” with a spirit of patriotism and philanthropy: it would “go down to posterity as an enduring monument of his generosity and of the greatness of his soul” (NT, 11 October 1910, 4). It continued to operate at least until the 1920s as a pioneering private Technical Institute.<sup>224</sup>

The Lagos press described industrial education as containing the moral advantage of regaining independence and self-respect as an African. In 1904, the *Lagos Standard* quoted James Johnson’s letter of 1872 to Governor of Sierra Leone, Pope Henessy, and reported industrial education as an ideal alternative to the practice of sending “native youths” to England for higher education which made the youth “destroy his race pride” and “love for our race”. The result of literary-oriented foreign education was described as follow: the youth would “look down with contempt upon the customs and institution of his own country” and would:

think more of everything that is foreign, and less of that which is purely native; have lost our self-respect and our love for our race, and become a sort of non-descript people, and are, in many things, inferior to our own brethren in the interior countries (LS, 3 May 1904, 2).

In the newspaper articles on Cole’s Technological Institute, the skilled workmen or properly qualified artisans were described as possessing “real independence” because they were not at the mercy of employers. What is noticeable here is that the idea of “self-help” was one of the essential concepts relating to the independence from the

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<sup>224</sup> Coker Papers 1/1/24 Letter on the payment for coffin (£4.10) from J. K. Coker to I. A. Cole, Principal of Technological Institute, Market Street Lagos (19 September 1922).

mimicry of Western practices (LS, 25 September 1907, 4). At the fifth anniversary ceremony of Cole's Institute in 1910, C. A. Sapara Williams made a speech, advising the youths to become mechanics rather than clerks at mercantile and officers in the Colonial Government, and thereby become "men who would be able to show to the world at large that the African is equal to any other Race of the world" (LS, 12 October 1910, 6). Then, Herbert Macaulay made a speech emphasising that the youths should live with self-respect as Africans. It was reported that he attributed the attitude of disregarding their "National Customs" and regarding them as not "honourable, virtuous, or elevating" to the German missionaries who first came to Nigeria to educate and Christianise Nigerian and who went further to make them "Europeanised native or Imitation Europeans". As Macaulay continued:

Our fathers were taught that everything European is superior, and everything Native is degrading, superstitious and immoral. The great unthinking majority of us today disregard even what is good in our National Customs and prefer to cling to the worse European vices when they are prepared to uphold as superior. Ladies and Gentlemen, the native must realise that he is an African first, and then a Christian or a British Subject. No amount of Education can make him, a European. He was born a Native, he will remain a Native, and it is most certain he will die a Native. If we want Lagos, Benin, Abeokuta, Ibadan, and Yorubaland to be included among the leading countries of the world, we must first of all identify ourselves with our Country (LS, 26 October 1910, 5).

We can find a similar description in the article on the Blaize Memorial Industrial Institution in Abeokuta. The institute was founded in 1908 after the death of Richard Beale Blaize (1845-1904) with £3,000 left by him for the purpose of encouraging local manufacturing activities and providing Africans with technical training.<sup>225</sup> He was the

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<sup>225</sup> R. B. Blaize to Native Pastorate, 21 November 1895 CMS Y 1/7, no.7. At his death, his

son of an Egba recaptive, originally came from Sierra Leone and worked as a head government printer in Lagos from 1871 to 1874, and started the *Lagos Times and Gold Coast Colony Advertiser* in 1880. He was, with James W. Cole, James J. Thomas, and B. A. Williams, included in the otherwise all European Lagos Chamber of Commerce constituted in 1888. He later became one of the most prominent and successful merchants in Lagos, retailing imported goods, which enabled him to donate £500 in memory of Mary Kingsley to the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine in 1900. In 1904 he accompanied the Alake of Abeokuta on his trip to England, but died later in the year shortly after their return. While Cole's Institution confined its function to teaching only carpentry and joinery, Blaize's Industrial Institute intended to teach a "wider range of trades, from which pupils may select the one for which their inclination or talents best fit them". The number of apprentices increased from six at its opening to twenty by 1910. Each pupil served four years of training in carpentry and other crafts, and at the end of their training, they were given a set of tools worth £6, and were then free to seek employment wherever they chose (LS, 19 February 1908, 4-5; LWR, 22 February 1908, 4-5; Webster 1963b, 425; Hopkins 1966a, 76-77).<sup>226</sup> The editorial of the *Lagos Weekly Record* reported the opening ceremony of the institute on 14 February 1908 and wrote that this institute was an instance of "public-spiritedness" and showed Blaize's belief in "the principle of communism". The word "communism" here was used as synonym for "co-operation" and "public-spiritedness" rather than as political movement or system of government. The editorial referred to Bishop Tugwell's view on "individualism" or "the spirit of selfishness with the African" and it proudly pointed out that this institute was a

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fortunes were estimated at £150,000. He left £500 to the Princess Christian Hospital in Sierra Leone (Kopytoff 1965, 283-84; Omu 1978, 29-30).

<sup>226</sup> In 1961 the Institute still flourishes with fifty resident apprentices and contributes to encouraging local manufacturing activities and providing Africans with technical training, but it appeared again in the press in 2008 as the setting of political corruption (Oni 2008).

refutation of his view on lack of public-spiritedness in West Africa. Although it had to admit that it was rare to “find the African devoting his money to purposes of public benefit” and that the “absence of any common interest naturally leads to the lack of co-operation” in current Lagos society, Blaize’s institute was “emblematic of the effort on the part of a single native” to exhibit his “adherence to the principle of communism which is the foundation and basis of native life” (LWR, 22 February 1904, 4-5). The editorial of the *Lagos Weekly Record* also quoted the Alake of Abeokuta’s speech in Yoruba at the opening ceremony which was said to unite the audience together as African:

He [Alake] addressed the assembly with his hand upon his breast.

“We are blackmen and should not be required or expected to act like whitemen in all things... The foreign methods we adopt must be understood in order to be really helpful. Therefore we must not be in too much haste in adopting the whiteman’s methods.” Loud cries of “muso”—*well done*—by all the aboriginal element, the Egba Chiefs and people present (22 February 1908, 5).

Lastly, it is worth mentioning that, at the 5th anniversary of Cole’s Technical Institution, Herbert Macaulay urged the importance of vernacular education, right after he criticised the tendency of blind imitation of Europeans. He criticised the Colonial Government for providing officers’ positions toward school boys that resulted in the youth rushing “into that service for the high pay” after less than three years of education (LS, 19 October 1910, 5). Macaulay emphasised the youths’ inability to read their own language as the result of pursuing clerkship occupations in the government that required English language:



Many of them can hardly write a sensible English letter and hardly any of them write even a Yoruba letter. I have met very few who could read the Yoruba Bible and most of those who can are unable to grasp it without reading the English version side by side with it. If we are to have Mechanics, they must be intelligent (LS, 26 October 1910, 5).

The debates on vernacular education can be traced back to the 1880s when the educational code, in 1882, became a vital topic of the press and the article which linked the artisans and vernacular language is also found in a 1880s Lagos newspaper. At the second anniversary meeting of the Mechanics Mutual Aid Provident and Improvement Association, which was inaugurated in 1883, after giving an account of one speech which lamented the youths' tendency to prefer white-collar occupations rather than mechanics, a correspondent of the *Lagos Observer* suddenly moved on to the subject of language:

Personally... I have always admired the self-confidence of our Yoruba speakers. Scarcely is here a man *in* Lagos who could give a *proper* Yoruba speech. Our contact with foreign tongue (specially English) has greatly minimised that power in us... It is an unpleasant effrontery, placing our mother-tongue in a disgraceful plight! [Italic font inserted according to the original text] (5 March 1885, 3).

In order to produce educated artisans, vernacular education should be promoted. It was because English was a language for white-collar occupations used at offices, while Yoruba was language for indigenous people including those of mechanical trades.

Despite the declamations from the press on “the dignity of labour”, artisanal occupations had been regarded as unremunerative and labour-intensive. As we have seen, when the press discussed the artisanal trade it not only suggested an actual shortage of numbers, but industrial education was represented as the means of social

progress and regaining racial pride. What should be pointed out is that, although members of the elite like Sapara Williams and Herbert Macaulay were criticising the youth's aspiration to white-collar occupations with the sole object of "making money", the educated elite themselves enjoyed the benefits of callings in professions, clerkship and commerce, and they continued to encourage their own children to pursue professional or literary educations as this was regarded as the way of success. When Herbert Macaulay enthusiastically exclaimed, "money is not the highest object in life. Be you a carpenter, a bricklayer, a painter... let each one do his duty faithfully and well"! (LS, 26 October 1910, 5), it seems clear that he had never thought of taking on an artisanal occupation himself, no matter that artisans were, according to him, independent, respectable, and the "real" members of the community. Thus skilled artisans were idealised and their occupations were depicted as essential occupations for regaining respect for race, pursuing "social progress" and "national independence" by the educated elite who had never imagined choosing these vocations for themselves. It is also worth pointing out that their encouragement to the artisans seems to have had certain limitations. The alliance of labourers, which led to strikes and protests to protect their own benefit without the educated elite's assistance, rarely received support from the press. Throughout the 1880s, the Lagos newspapers actively discussed the existence of the Butchers' Society which was reported to sell diseased meat and try to cheat in measuring weights for their own benefit, and even raise the price 20% when the Government Slaughter house was established in order to regulate meat supply.<sup>227</sup> There was a general strike of labourers in the Surveyor's Department of the civil government in July 1887 (LO, 3 July 1886, 3), but neither was described in a sympathetic tone.

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<sup>227</sup> Relating debates can be found in the following articles: LO, 4 May 1882, 2-3; 9 November 1882, 2; 18 January 1883, 2-3; 29 March 1883, 2; 7 June 1883, 2-3; 20 March 1886, 3; 3 April 1886, 2; E&LC, 27 March 1886, 3; 10 April 1886, 4.

Unity between labourers and the educated elite cannot be seen in the description of industry in Lagos newspapers, however, there were at least efforts of the educated elite to break down social cleavage through promoting industrial education and encouraging the youth to take on artisanal occupation. In addition, as we can see in the next section, in the early twentieth century agriculture seems to pave the way to the sense of unity among the educated elite, semi-educated, and the mass with the same aim of acquiring economic profit by the production of new agricultural products, such as cocoa, cotton, and rubber.

### **5.3. Farmer, a “True” and “Natural” Occupation**

#### **5.3.1. Agriculture for Economic and Spiritual Progress**

Agriculture was the chief economic activity for most Nigerians until decline in agricultural production began with the advent of the petroleum boom in the early 1970s. In the late nineteenth century, the *Lagos Weekly Record* mentioned that there had already been men like J. S. Leigh, J. P. L. Davies and I. H. Willoughby “who showed a preference for agriculture and put forth considerable efforts and outlay in founding plantations for the cultivation of coffee, cocoa and other products” at Ijo, Itele and Ebute Metta (LWR, 17 April 1897, 4). As well as these large farming enterprises, cultivation on small plots or gardens inside the towns was frequently undertaken to produce “crops such as vegetables, beans, pepper and maize” (Ekundare 1973, 39-41; Hopkins 1973, 28). While the gradual prominence of agricultural products in export was the “obvious characteristic” of the Nigerian economy in the later nineteenth century and its development led the growth of cash economy in the early twentieth century, direct

intervention by the colonial government in agricultural production and marketing was very limited until the Second World War. Since Governor Sir Alfred Moloney founded the first botanic station at Ebute Metta in 1887 (LS, 16 November 1898, 3) (see Plate 6 for a photograph of the botanic garden), the colonial administration, under the control of the Forestry Department and the Agricultural Department from 1910, experimented with the introduction of new plants—such as rubber, cotton, palm oil, and distributed seeds to farmers in order to promote export trade. Apart from cotton, however, the “encouragement did not extend much beyond work on experimental stations” (Forrest 1981, 222-23). Government model farms and botanic stations generally ended in failure due to its insufficient knowledge of local environment and were kept going through assistance from African capitalist farmers, especially in Agege, situated on the Lagos-Abeokuta road 10 miles north west of Ebute Metta (Berry 1975; Hopkins 1978, 87-88). The pioneering farmers of Yorubaland were not “poor” peasants, but capitalists, the men “of money who can afford to start and devote... whole attention to such productions as coffee, cocoa, kola and the like, and which take years to mature” (LWR, 26 September 1896, 4). The fact, that agriculture was the arena for African capitalists who could take leadership in investment and in experimentation with new crops, “was not reported to the Colonial Office, and which is known now only because of the survival of private papers of the farmers themselves” (Hopkins 1978, 87-88).

**Plate 6: Government Botanic Garden**



[Source: CMS Album, Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan]

The issue of agriculture had never occupied the editorials of Lagos newspapers in the 1880s, but from the beginning of the twentieth century onwards it was taken up more frequently as one of the major topics. It has been suggested that one of the main reasons behind this change of attention was the decline in the profit of external trade, which was originally determined by market trends in Europe and established a cyclical pattern of booms and slumps (Berry 1975; Hopkins 1978). From the 1840s the external slave trade began to decline and was gradually replaced by so-called “legitimate commerce”.<sup>228</sup> For the rest of the nineteenth and the early twentieth century the

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<sup>228</sup> This was due to the abolitionist campaigns to reform African economy and society through a combination of “Commerce, Civilization and Christianity”. By the mid nineteenth century the view that “legitimate” commerce in Africa, especially the export of agricultural produce, would help to eradicate the Atlantic slave trade and bring mutual benefits to Britain and Africa had become a central tenet of mainstream abolitionist thought. This plan which symbolised Thomas

commerce of Lagos was geared to an export economy which depended almost entirely on palm produce.<sup>229</sup> For that reason, the falling palm produce prices in the 1890s became an incentive for traders to search for alternative sources of income. In 1851, a ton of palm oil sold in England for £40 but by 1881 the price was only about £30, which represented a drop of 25% in thirty years (LT, 27 July 1881, 2; *Lagos Annual Report* 1890). From 1881 to 1885 the European price for Lagos palm oil and kernels averaged £33 and £13 respectively, and the corresponding figures for the years between 1886 and 1892 were £22 and £10. In this short period the palm oil price fell about 33% and about 22% in the case of palm kernels (see Appendix 17). It was partly as the result of American petroleum flooding into Europe on markets that the demand for Nigerian palm oil fell (Ekundare 1973, 94).<sup>230</sup> Since 82.5% of the Lagos total exports consisted of palm products between 1880 and 1892 the decline in world prices for palm produce had a particularly severe impact on African merchants, who composed more than half of the population in Lagos.

The development of transportation also influenced the traders, as it gave European firms such as the Royal Niger Company and the United Africa Company direct access to the interior and enabled them to establish branches there. From the second half of the 1890s, the colonial government undertook projects to improve the

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Fowell Buxton's charter for Africa (expressed in his *The African Slave Trade, and its Remedy* published in 1839) became popularly labelled "the Bible and the Plough" (Webster 1963b, 418; Ajayi [1965] 1969a, 11).

<sup>229</sup> The bulk of Nigerian palm kernels were exported to Europe, mainly to Germany which took an average of 70% of the annual export in each year of the period 1862-1899. An average of 50% of the palm oil was exported mainly to the United Kingdom in each year of the same period. For the import trade, cotton goods and spirits (gin and rum) constituted an average of 44% and 21% respectively of the total amounts between 1880 and 1892. The remaining 35% was composed of the luxury articles such as tobacco, beads, clothes, medicines (Hopkins 1964, 31; Ekundare 1973, 95).

<sup>230</sup> From the early nineteenth century, palm oil had been used as lubricant for machinery and wheels in Europe at the same time used as the ingredient for soaps and margarines (Ekundare 1973, 32 & 94).

transportation in Nigeria in order to facilitate the export of commodities. The railway was established from Lagos to Otta in 1898, and this line reached Ibadan in 1901 (120 miles from Lagos), Oshogbo in 1907 and Jebba (303 miles from Lagos) in 1909 (Ekundare 1973, 74-75 & 135). This enabled the capitalist African farmers to export their own products, but, at the same time, Lagos merchants and traders faced harsher conditions as it undermined the need of African “middlemen” to link the coast with its hinterland. According to the *Lagos Standard* in 1900, “75% of the traders” who had thrived in the last 20 years were either bankrupt or were living a hand-to-mouth existence,<sup>231</sup> and they were forced to look for alternative income earning opportunities in agriculture (23 May 1900, 3). In addition, a general demobilisation after the end of the final phase of Yoruba Wars, which lasted from 1877 to 1893, and the advent of British rule affected the distribution of economic opportunities among Yoruba communities. The ex-soldiers in the interior fell back on farming to escape the economic consequences of the peace (Berry 1985).

The above-mentioned economic trends certainly boosted the growing interest in agriculture, but an examination of newspaper descriptions in this research shows that there might be other essential factors which influenced the Lagos press to encourage its readers to switch to agriculture. Another reason for the press’s growing attention to agriculture can be explained from the ideological tide of the early twentieth century. This was the period that the Lagos press devoted huge space on how Africa should develop in its own way, and agriculture was described as supporting African way of progress and solidarity of the society. Agriculture was classed among the most “natural” and most useful occupations for people in Africa because “from the earliest times, man

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<sup>231</sup> Hopkins suggested that the business run by African merchants tended to die with the founder partly because of the lack of concept that business was an impersonal and long-term occupation (1964).

has tilled the soil” and agriculture belonged to “the production of food for man and animals; on it depends the welfare and development of the whole human species, the riches of states, and all industries, manufacturing and commercial” (LS, 4 September 1901, 2-3). As early as 1896, agriculture was reported to be “the real solid basis in the development of a country” which “should be successfully started on improved lines and cheap scale” in Lagos (LWR, 26 September 1896, 4). In the editorial entitled “A Plea for the More General Pursuit of Agriculture as a Calling” in 1900, the *Lagos Standard* argued that 75% of African traders who had once thrived ended up in downfall because of severe competitions with European firms, therefore, “it is obvious then that we must retrace our steps, go back and become *producers*, and furnish something that the world wants, if we would be making real progress”, which was suitable for the African line (23 May 1900, 3).

According to the *Lagos Weekly Record* in 1905, the statement that the future hope of the colony rested on its agricultural production had already been accepted as “axiomatic” at least from an economic standpoint, and as well as its material benefits, the newspaper emphasised other indirect benefits of agriculture (8 February 1905, 4). The calling of farming was closely connected to “Native-ness”, most “natural” occupation for Africans as it suited the soil and had long history. It was depicted as contributing to the moral advantage of cultivating “spirit of independency” and inculcating respect for the dignity of manual labour (LWR, 28 May 1904, 4). In his column of “Lagosian on Dits”, “Junus” described a farmer as an “ideal” existence:

who lives an independent life, surrounded by the comforts, and even the luxuries of existence—who can look everybody squarely in the face, because he owes no man anything—the average native youth has no conception; any more than he has of how much more manly and enjoyable such a life is than being compelled to



submit to the petty tyranny, hardships, and numberless inconveniences and makeshifts that the life of the average clerk entails (LS, 10 July 1901, 2).

### 5.3.2. The Lagos Agricultural Shows and the Abeokuta Museum

Here are another two noteworthy examples of the Lagos press describing agriculture as contributing toward not only material welfare, but also the mentality or “spiritual” side of the society. The first is the newspaper articles on the Lagos Agricultural Shows, describing agriculture as contributing towards, not only the material welfare and “independence of natives”, but also to the “solidarity” of the “native community” (LWR, 13 June 1908, 4). From 1903, an agricultural show was initiated every 3 years by the colonial government with the assistance of local agrarian associations such as the Agege Planter’s Union, the Egba Farmers Association, and the Ibadan Agricultural Society. Executive committees of the show consisted of Henry Carr of the Lagos Agricultural Union, Adegboyega Edun (formerly Rev. J. H. Samuel) who was the president of Egba Farmers Association, some Agege farmers such as J. K. Coker and F. E. Williams, and other leading figures like C. A. Sapara Williams and Joseph Edgerton Shyngle.<sup>232</sup> The show was expected to have excellent educational effects on farmers in the interior and the return train tickets from Ibadan and Abeokuta were prepared at the rates of 5 shillings and 2 shillings 6 pence respectively (LWR, 3 November 1906, 3). As well as the exhibition of agricultural products, there were amusements like a merry-go-round, kite flying, a bicycle race and various athletics competition for which the winners were given £1 each (LWR, 17 November 1906, 6).

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<sup>232</sup> Shyngle was born on 15 March 1862 in Bathurst, Gambia. He was educated at the Grammar School and the Fourah Bay College at Freetown and in the University of Oxford. He left Fourah Bay College and Oxford without degree, but was called to the Bar in the Middle Temple in 1888 and worked as lawyer in Lagos until his death on 19 March 1926 (Gwam 1976, 11).

At the Lagos Agricultural Show in 1906, exhibits representing numerous forest and plantation produce, foodstuffs and livestock, such as coconut, cocoa, tobacco, maize, kola nuts and koko yams; combined with implements and machinery, were collected and arranged upon a circle of stands in the Race Course. The total number of exhibits for competition amounted 2477, and the owner of the product winning the first prize was given between 20 shillings and £4 (LWR, 3 November 1906, 3). Agege farmers won the largest number of prizes at the show winning 57 out of a total of 125 prizes and successful results of agricultural enterprise at Agege were noted as “tangible and appreciable” (LWR, 1 December 1906, 4).<sup>233</sup>

By acquiring knowledge of effective and advanced agricultural methods, the show would serve to “lift the Native from a state of dependence to one of independence, with all its attendant advantages morally, socially and economically” (LWR, 1 December 1906, 4). Moreover, the *Lagos Weekly Record* reported that the unparalleled advantage of the Agricultural Show was viewing the great assemblage of “mixed African peoples” despite their difference of origins, including representatives “from Iddah, Asaba, and Onitsha on the Niger, from Calabar, Bonny, and Opobo in the Delta, from Warri, Benin and Sapeli [sic: Sapele] and every part of the Lagos Hinterland”:

one could not help but feel that the promise [of the country] was greater... in respect to the opportunity given for the African to see and appreciate the **oneness** which binds him together wherever he may be... It was impossible to distinguish between the Calabar man and the Yoruba man in the assemblage of mixed tribes which stood in front of the Grand Stand during the Governor’s speech, and perhaps the greatest and most potent result of the Agricultural Show will be the political effect resisting from the practical demonstration to the African that he stands on a common ground and is subject to like conditions and that his interests

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<sup>233</sup> Coker Papers 1/1/29.

are one and indivisible (24 November 1906, 4).

These agricultural shows not only demonstrated the gathering of “people from every part of the colony and Protectorate for one common purpose and inspired with a spirit of unity and friendliness”. They were also described as an “irresistible evidence of the wonderful effect wrought by the *Pax Britannica*” which could lead people to feel wider union of the British Empire (LWR, 5 January 1907, 4).

The second example of the newspaper descriptions of agriculture contributing toward the mentality or “spiritual” advancement of the society can be seen in the articles on the Abeokuta Museum. As well as the Lagos Agricultural Shows, the museum was reported to be a noticeable example of an educational tool for farmers. While it is generally concurred that “Nigerian museums are a 20<sup>th</sup> century phenomenon” since the first national museum in Nigeria was built in 1948 at Esie (Kaplan 1994, 45), the Egba United Government in Abeokuta inaugurated this museum with exhibitions of industrial and agricultural products as early as 1907. The museum owes its existence to an idea suggested by the Alake of Abeokuta, who had been inspired by agricultural exhibitions in England, when he visited there in 1903, as well as Cyril Punch, a British Commissioner who had a great interest in the agricultural development of Abeokuta. The museum was intended to become “the great centre of information to Egba farmers, the Home of the economic products of the Country and the School of practical and enlightened education to Abeokuta children”. Exhibits were divided into 11 sections: Forest products; Agricultural products; Minor products; Fibre (cotton, piassava, kapok (egugu), gnewutu, ire, bolobolo, ewedu); Dyes; Drugs; Foodstuffs; Industries (weaving, iron and brass works, pottery, carving, agricultural implements, dyeing, glasswork, beads, soap); Minerals; Clays and Soils; Natural History (butterflies, birds, reptiles)

(LWR, 4 May 1907, 4). Inside the museum site, there were a flower garden and a reading room which was attended by Grammar School boys. According to Adegboyega Edun, a Honorary Secretary of the Committee of the Abeokuta Museum, “it is not an insignificant fact that Abeokuta has sometimes taken the initiative in certain things which may be regarded as forces making for national progress” (LWR, 4 May 1907, 4). “Egba Oke Ọna”, a correspondent to the *Lagos Standard* admitted that the museum became dignified proof of them being “not behind other nations who have centuries of years of civilisation at their back” though he suggested that a hospital would be more beneficial for people (LS, 31 July 1907, 6). What is more, this progress seems to be not exactly the same as that of Western countries. It was reported that the Alake insisted on the importance of preserving African-ness and claimed “we have to remember that we are Africans and we can never aspire to the knowledge and perfection of the English men” (*Egba Government Gazette*, 30 April 1907).<sup>234</sup>

### 5.3.3. The Agege Planters’ Union

Agricultural development, described as essential for African natural progress, was stimulated by agrarian associations, especially those of Agege, which played an essential role in the cultivation and dissemination of cash crops in southern Nigeria. The planters in Agege turned to agriculture and began to experiment with cash crops such as cocoa, rubber, coffee, kola nut, groundnuts and palm tree when their commercial ventures in Lagos suffered from depressed world market conditions at the turn of the

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<sup>234</sup> It is noteworthy that the educated elite in Africa had an ambivalent attitude toward Western civilisation. While the Lagos press described agriculture as essential for African progress, it also frequently used Western countries as model to follow. For instance, the *Lagos Standard*, urged people in Lagos to follow “civilised countries” where farmers were recognised as “respectable and honourable calling” (2 August 1911, 4).

twentieth century. Of these cash crops, cocoa was the most important product introduced into south western Nigeria,<sup>235</sup> whose exportation expanded from an average of 305 tons over the period 1900-4 to an average of 45,483 tons between 1925 and 1929. It originates in South America, probably in the tropical rain forest climatic zone of Brazil, and was introduced into Fernando Po Island by the Portuguese in 1822. There are conflicting accounts of how and when cocoa came to be introduced, but J. P. L. Davies was said to be the first to grow cocoa extensively in 1880s southern Nigeria: he had a plantation at Ijan, near Agege. The twin brother of Jacob Kehinde Coker (1866-1945),<sup>236</sup> Dr. John O. Coker, a government medical officer, married Stella, the second daughter of Davies in 1898 and this connection enabled J. K. Coker, who later became the leading figure in Agege plantations, to begin his experiment in cocoa (Webster 1963b; Oyenuga 1967; Ekundare 1973; Berry 1975; Hopkins 1978, 83-96; Mann 2007, 158-159).

By the beginning of the twentieth century Agege had become an important agricultural centre in southern Nigeria, and not only Lagos traders but also clergymen and laymen in the newly formed African Church moved there to begin farming to supplement their earnings. Their plantations became a centre for evangelism as well as a centre for distributing seeds and practical instruction in growing a large number of cash crops. The Agege planters required a large amount of unskilled labour, recruited in the

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<sup>235</sup> The most important export crops produced in colonial Nigeria were groundnuts and cotton in the north, cocoa in the southwest, and palm produce in the southeast. The exportation of cash crops grew exponentially in the period before 1930 (Falola and Heaton 2008, 119).

<sup>236</sup> J. K. Coker was born at Abeokuta as the eldest son of Ajobo Coker, a prosperous cotton farmer, who had engaged in an import-export business in Lagos from 1870s. J. K. Coker was educated in Ake School in Abeokuta and at Breadfruit Church School, Lagos. He entered farming enterprise in 1885 when he established a farm at Ifako in the Agege District, and worked as a respected farmer, prosperous businessman, Chief Prakoyi of Abeokuta, Secretary of the General Committee of the African Church and the Secretary of the Agege Planters' Union (Macmillan [1920] 1968, 114; Webster 1964; Akinwumi 2002).

interior and hired on a year's contract.<sup>237</sup> For these labours, they prepared a firm educational system: the vernacular school, primary school and post-primary school for the children, and night-school classes for the adults. In their primary school, one day in the week was "spent on Agricultural and Handicraft training for boys, also on Domestic Economy for girls, under proper guidance". "Gardening" and "Agricultural Training" was also taught in vernacular school and in post-primary school respectively.<sup>238</sup> In addition, the United African Church established the African Church Training Institute at Agege for industrial trainings (LS, 1 March 1916, 4).

The planters acted as chiefs, arbitrators and judges, as well as employers, and sometimes provided feasts with music and dancing (Webster 1963a, 1963b, 1964; Adenijia 1986). Plate 7 below is a programme of entertainment at Agege on 7 October, 1910. The variety show included both Yoruba and European entertainment—such as a "Native dance" with "*Sẹkẹrẹ*" (Yoruba traditional hand drum—*sekere* is a calabash covered with a net threaded with cowries, which is shaken to produce a rattling/swishing sound),<sup>239</sup> a dialogue play, titled "*Alajọfulẹ*", songs in English, titled "Happy Hours" and "Star of the Twilight", and a Yoruba song, "*Sofọ, Sofeta, Kianka*"—performed by labourers from the Agege plantation. This would have demonstrated

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<sup>237</sup> J. K. Coker employed two hundred unskilled labourers per year and it amounted to over 2000 between 1904 and 1920 (Webster 1963b, 431).

<sup>238</sup> Coker Papers 1/1/3, Scheme of Education in Agege District (undated). See Appendix 18 for the contents of this scheme. A brief report on the visit of A.D. Peacock, a British entomologist in the Agricultural Department, to Agege District from 19 to 26 February 1912 mentions private schooling in Agege and reports that "there is a spirit of farsighghtness [sic: farsightedness] business and patriotism" (Coker Papers 1/1/20).

<sup>239</sup> It would be noticeable that the Lagos newspapers described "native plays" and "agriculture" using similar terms, such as "natural" and "self-respect". In 1903, the *Lagos Weekly Record* remarked that "indigenous plays embodying "recitals of incidents in the national life of the people" that "import a naturalness" would "enhance our own self respect and elevate and give tone to native sentiment" (14 November 1903, 4). In 1911, the *Lagos Standard* praised a Yoruba play titled "Oba Olokiki ati ore re Ilare" by a group called "Egbe Ireti" and wrote: "the different characters sustained their parts admirably, and with a naturalness" in their Yoruba dresses (LS, 16 August 1911, 4-5).

support for Yoruba culture. At the same time, the phrase “God Save the King” written at the end of the programme shows their world view of the time that they did not question the authority of the British monarch or occupation by the British.

Plate 7: Programme of the Entertainment at Agege Plantation on 7 October 1910

P R O G R A M M E		
of the		
Entertainment.		
<hr/>		
1. Native Dance.	Sekere	Mr. J.S. Adebayo & others.
2. Recitation.	O k o	Master Lasisi & others.
3. Dialogue.	Alajefule (Part I)	Mr. J.A. Daniel & others.
4. S o n g.	"Happy Hours."	Miss L. Olulode & others.
5. Recitation.	Selected	Mr. - Holloway.
6. S o n g.	"Do you still remember?"	Miss. C. Adesanya.
7. Recitation.	E g o	Mr. D. Soyemi.
8. Dialogue.	Alajefule (Part II)	Mr. S.A. Turlo & others.
9. S o n g.	"Star of the twilight"	Misses C. Akitinlu and B. Yasho
10. Recitation.	Selected	Mr. S. A. Sanyaolu.
11. S o n g.	"Sofa, Sofeta, Kianka"	Messrs. E.A. Delalu and E.M. Thomas.
12. Recitation.	Selected	Mr. J. B. Thomas.
13. Dialogue.	Alajefule (Part III)	Mr. S.A. Olulode & others.
14. S o n g.	Native Lore	Mr. D. A. Oyedele.
15. S o n g.	Selected	Mr. S. A. Sanyaolu.
16. S o n g.	Selected	Mr. J. A. Daniel.
God save the King.		
<hr/>		
Salem School Room. Oct: 7, 1910.		

[Source: Coker Papers 1/1/3]

The planters in Agege established the early form of indigenous marketing co-operative society. On 5 July 1906, the Agege Planters' Union was formed by



Africans, without foreign assistance, with 250 members and a dozen large planters headed by J. K. Coker, and the Egba merchants who were driven out of business by the earlier decline in the palm produce trade and had begun experimenting with cash crops. The Union was inaugurated with the object of protecting their own interests while promoting cocoa cultivation through propaganda and assistance to small farmers. It played a significant role in the early phase of cash crop cultivation in southern Nigeria until the 1930s,<sup>240</sup> by providing the credit facilities to members, disseminating knowledge on improving the quality of products, especially on cocoa fermentation and insect control, and constructing roads for easy transportation of products.<sup>241</sup> Their products were fetching high prices on account of their quality, and won prizes at international exhibitions, like the Franco-British Exhibition (1909).<sup>242</sup> In Lagos newspapers, the Agege Planters' Union was described as the leading figure in agricultural development in the interior and was the symbol of the "advanced" method:

Farmers from Ibadan, Abeokuta, Calabar and the Eastern Province have visited plantations at Agege to gain some experience. It is indeed a fact that every interior farmers regard Agege farms as the lead in Agriculture in Southern Nigeria (LS, 11 November 1908, 6).

The Union utilized new equipments such as wagons for transportation and palm oil extract machines. They carried out trial of the palm oil extract machine made by H. C. Phillip of Abeokuta Grammar School and invited the members of the Egba Farmers

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<sup>240</sup> The importance of the Agege Planters' Union decreased after 1920 because of the widespread cultivation of the cash crop in the Yoruba country and the post-war slump (Webster 1963b; Hopkins 1978).

<sup>241</sup> The Union was asked to arrange a lecture on construction of road. Coker Papers 1/1/61, Letter from G. O. Agbebi G. to the Agege Planters' Union, 28 October 1919.

<sup>242</sup> Coker Papers 1/1/27, Letter from Colonial Secretary Office, Southern Nigeria to J. K. Coker, 24 May 1910.

Association to join.<sup>243</sup> In 1909 the Director of Agriculture Department approached J. K. Coker to visit the Agege district in order to “get any information that you may give in connection with Agricultural matter in your district”<sup>244</sup> and H. Craig, a representative of Cadbury Brothers, visited Agege in 1912 “for the purpose of making enquiries regarding the cultivation of cocoa”.<sup>245</sup> Some Agege planters were sent to other part of southern Nigeria such as Ijebu, Ibadan and Abeokuta to assist the experimental stations of colonial government in order to instruct the farmers on the cultivation and preparation of cocoa.<sup>246</sup> Though the government sent a letter to show their dissatisfaction at the laziness of two cocoa instructors who came from Agege but abandoned their work and ran away from the Moore Plantation<sup>247</sup> at Ibadan without permission,<sup>248</sup> it demonstrates that plantations in Agege occupied an important role in agricultural development of southern Nigeria.

#### 5.4. Conclusion

As we have seen in this chapter, the practical issues—such as the poor quality and shortage of skilled labourers, the decline of commercial opportunities, and severe competition with European firms—were not the only reasons for the growing attention

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<sup>243</sup> Coker Papers 1/1/19, Letter from J. K. Coker to the president of Egba Farmers Association, 23 October 1909. The Egba Farmers Association carried out trial of wagon imported from UK in 1908 but resulted in failure (LWR, 18 April 1908, 3).

<sup>244</sup> Coker Papers 1/1/19, Letter from the Forestry Department, Ibadan to J. K. Coker, 10 June 1909.

<sup>245</sup> Coker Papers 1/1/20, Letter from Henry Carr, Education Office to Agege Planters’ Union, 3 May 1912.

<sup>246</sup> Coker Papers 1/1/61.

<sup>247</sup> British colonial government in Southern Nigeria developed this plantation between 1912 and 1916 for agricultural experiment (Dennett 1919; Ekundare 1973, 159).

<sup>248</sup> Coker Papers 1/1/20, Letter from R. Nicole, a Superintendent of Agriculture, Ibadan, Western Province, to J. K. Coker, 12 December 1912. Coker Papers 1/1/61, Letter from J. K. Coker to the Director of Agriculture Ibadan, 6 February 1919.

of the Lagos press to agriculture and industries in the early twentieth century. Steering the youth and re-constructing Lagos society was a conscious objective of the press. What they called the “moral advantages” of industry and agriculture were closely linked with discussions on how Lagos society should develop in its own way and what African civilisation should be. Skilled artisans and farmers were idealised as examples of the spirit of independence, no longer valuing the unnecessary mimicry of Western society. Newspaper reports emphasised that Lagos could regain self-respect and unity as an African society and eventually progress “naturally” if youths took on agricultural and industrial occupations. It seems that the Lagos press was implying that the African people of Lagos could fulfil their “civic responsibilities” by searching for and developing their own way of progress by the establishment of industrial institutes and the production of cash crops, which would then become the visualised forms of a race-specific mode of progress. What is more, the encouragement of industrial and agricultural associations for the purpose of raising the social standing of artisans and farmers was an attempt by the Lagos press to improve the standards and increase the productivity of those workers through practical education, but it was not an attempt to raise them up to the position of the educated elite, the leaders of the society. Although the educated elite proclaimed the importance of “unity” amongst the African race and the need for public-spiritedness in Lagos, they did not question their own social status and cultural privileges.

It is also noteworthy that the Lagos press described other British West African colonies, America and Britain as not only the precursors of modernisation that had initially begun as “granaries of [the] world” (LWR, 28 May 1904, 4), but also as rivals. In 1898, the *Lagos Standard* reported on the Sierra Leone Agricultural Exhibition, which had been held at the Wilberforce Memorial Hall in Freetown, expressing

competitive feelings towards Sierra Leone:

Our sister colony is demonstrating in a practical way the possibilities of the soil and what can be done in the agricultural line, and encouraging by prizes in money and certificates of merit all honest efforts in that direction. This is one of the things they do better... than we do here (16 March 1898, 2).

Lastly, I would like to go back to the photograph of the Government Botanic Garden in Plate 6. In this picture, white officers are situated in the centre, representing the colonial power of Britain. Two African labourers are working under their supervision. It seems that the Lagos press attempted to reverse this idea by discussing agriculture as “naturally” African.

The next chapter will examine newspaper descriptions of public celebrations of the British Empire in Lagos, such as the Colonial and Indian Exhibition, Queen Victoria’s Jubilees, and Empire Day celebrations; and of related voluntary associations, as well as, during WWI, war relief fund-raising societies.

## CHAPTER 6

### THE BRITISH EMPIRE AS AN IMAGINED UNITY: ASSOCIATIONS ON CEREMONIES OF THE EMPIRE AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE YORUBA “NATION”

#### 6.1. Introduction

Interpreting the colonial period is one of the big, on-going debates, not only in British history but also in African history. This chapter explores Nigerians’ experiences of the British Empire by focusing attention on their reports and discussions in Lagos newspapers. The academic field of African history and British imperial history has been segregated, in spite of several attempts to unify the two;<sup>249</sup> therefore, this chapter attempts to bridge the gap between the two fields.

The approach to writing a history of colonial Africa is still a contentious subject. Africanist historians, after the 1970s, successfully produced research on the “colonised” situation from an African perspective,<sup>250</sup> although everything that happened in the colonial period cannot be compressed into a story framed by imperial control and nationalist counter-assertion. The recent historiography has “challenged the dichotomy between colonizer and colonized” (Schmidt 2007, 259), however, few could make a proposal for an alternative framework with which to illustrate the interactions of the coloniser and colonised and to examine the ambiguity of the distinctions between the two categories.

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<sup>249</sup> Newell (2002) would be one of the examples of an attempt in the field of print culture in colonial Africa.

<sup>250</sup> Especially, Boahen ([1985] 1990) *UNESCO General History of Africa*, vol. 7.

This thesis concurs with Newell's (2002) suggestion of applying the neologism "para-colonial" to describe the complex and multidimensional culture and history of West Africa, which "were neither the direct products of British colonialism nor the products of purely pre-colonial formations" (3). According to Newell, the "prefix *para*- contains an ambiguity which is ideal for describing cultural flows in colonial West Africa, for it signifies *beside* and also *beyond*. The shift to the notion of the paracolonial allows us to discard the centre-periphery model and instead to analyse in historical and sociological detail the local cultural productivity which undoubtedly took place over the generations, *alongside* and *beyond* the British presence in the region, as a consequence of the British presence but not as its direct product"(44). Within the framework of "para-colonial", we could transcend the dichotomy of coloniser/colonised, as well as "displace the Eurocentric and deterministic periodisation of culture and history in the colonies as being 'pre'-colonial, colonial and 'post'-colonial" (ibid). While it is necessary to remain aware of the violence of the colonial encounter, this framework will be useful for research on the cultural history of colonial West Africa.

In the field of British imperial history, this chapter serves as one of the attempts to challenge the categories of "old" and "new" imperial history, both of which tend to privilege the "metropolitan gaze". The boundaries between "old" and "new" approaches to the British Empire are nebulous; however, the concerns of "old" imperial history can be said to have traditionally focused on political or economic domination; that is, on military force, civil administration and economic development or exploitation. Culture and discourses of imperialism, on the other hand, are the defining concern of the "new" imperial historians. New imperial history includes critiques of "nation-centred historical models" and suggestions of "imperial cultures as global networks" (Howe 2010, 2). While "old" imperial history emphasises the impact of British economy and politics on

colonies, the “new” approach includes examination of representations of empire in British society and the role of imperialism in forging metropolitan culture and identity (Thompson 2005; Hall and Sonya 2006); namely, how the empire helped to shape domestic British politics and culture. Some would characterise the latter, with its interdisciplinary approach, as the post-1980 explosion of “new” cultural histories of empire, developed significantly in response to literary and cultural studies.<sup>251</sup> It often combines history, literary criticism, and ethnography, and covers diverse themes, not only culture and discourses, but also ecological history, gender studies, identity and race. Whilst critics of the “new” approach allege that it has involved an unhealthy neglect of the material and legal arm of British imperialism,<sup>252</sup> “new imperial history” has, nevertheless, contributed significantly to the present vitality of the colonised subject.

Although the approach of this research has in common with that of “new” imperial history, which focuses on culture and discourses of empire, concurring with the oft-stated notion of “new” imperial history that the histories of Britain and its empire are “mutually constituted” (Price 2006, 603), it should be noted that describing their mutual relationships and mutual influences is easier to propose than to execute. It is

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<sup>251</sup> Since the 1980s, the Manchester University Press series “Studies in Imperialism” have published more than eighty books that have contributed significantly to the stimulation of the cultural history of modern British imperialism, and which cover a wide spectrum of cultural phenomena, such as music hall, exhibitions, magazines, medicine, film, literature, gender, race, migration, environment, and so on. However, the series editor, John MacKenzie, “has distanced himself from the canonical works of the ‘new’ imperial history”, which have commonly derived from literary criticism (Marshall 2004). Nevertheless, Howe (2010) suggests that MacKenzie can be categorised as “new” imperial historian as his focus is on social and culture of the British Empire and the impacts of colonies on the imperial metropolis (3, 17-18 & chapter 19). See Howe (2010) for the collection of some of the most important, influential and controversial works labelled “new imperial history”.

<sup>252</sup> There are four main critical views on “new imperial history”: Firstly, its lack of consideration in categories such as “political economy” or notion of the “state”; secondly, absence of “issues of periodization and of historical change”; thirdly its failure to escape the metropolitan gaze, despite the “oft-stated objective of the new imperial history to decenter the metropole”, as it rarely moves beyond British sources or perspectives; fourthly, lack of observation on “how empire-British connections worked in practice” (Price 2006, 603-4).

accepted that the responses to colonialism were not simply polarised between imitation and rejection, or collaboration<sup>253</sup> and resistance; however, there are not many studies with an adequate examination of the complexities in each colonial situation. By using the Lagos newspapers as a primary source, this research attempts to explore the peripheral views of the British Empire through “colonised” minds.<sup>254</sup> Moreover, I would like to focus attention on the attempts of the Lagos press to adapt and, accordingly, evolve British imperial ideology for the purpose of encouraging the “civilisation” of their society.

This chapter points out that from the 1880s onwards the debates and practices associated with celebrating the British Empire influenced the self-perceptions of the Lagos intellectuals engaged in newspaper publication. Celebrations and related activities, as well as fund raising activities during WWI, made the Lagos educated elite feel: a sense of belonging to a world power, an association with other colonies, an

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<sup>253</sup> Ronald Robinson (1972) was one of the first scholars to suggest the importance of indigenous pressures in the establishment and character of colonial rule. The whole idea of colonial “collaboration” is still intensely contested, but key propositions that can be deduced from the discussion on collaboration are as follows: 1. “colonialism depended crucially on collaboration” and the nature of collaborative bargains determined the character and the longevity of colonial rule in particular areas. 2. “anticolonial nationalism was a loose, indeed strikingly fragile alliance of local and sectional interests.” 3. “conflict between colonial rulers and nationalists was neither a fundamental clash of principled aspirations, nor the main dynamic of later-imperial social or political change” (Howe 2010, 13). These arguments were criticised by historians associated with Subaltern Studies as well as “Africanist” historians (Wilson 2008, 250).

<sup>254</sup> One of the important debates in British imperial history is on the cause of British colonial expansion—whether economic or political aspiration moved Britain to expand its colonies, and whether home or colonial situations supported its expansion. John Gallagher and Ronald Robinson emphasised political rather than economic reasons for British imperialism and argued in their article “The Imperialism of Free Trade” (1953) that “Britain’s preferred mode of expansion was always informal, the direct annexation of overseas territory being a last resort, and one undertaken not in response to pressure from public opinion or economic interests, but by a policy-making élite: the famous ‘official mind’” (Howe 2010, 10). Their work with Alice Denny, *Africa and the Victorians* (1961), was to posit a “peripheral” view of empire through the “official mind” of the metropole. According to them, the Scramble for Africa was, “driven by crises on the periphery, and by desire to protect British control of India, the nucleus of empire. Neither the supposed needs of industrial or finance capital, nor any significant or elaborated imperialist ideology, played much role” (ibid).



attraction to the British monarchy, as well as an obligation, and the possibility of establishing unity in their society, either in Lagos, in Yorubaland or, later, in Nigeria. In these events and associations, it was not only the Christian Yoruba educated elite who played an important role. Voluntary associations were often composed of both European and educated elite, and events were often attended not only by Europeans and the men and women of the educated Christian elite, but also by traditional elite like chiefs and *obas* (kings), Brazilians, Muslims, Syrians, and “pagan” non-elite people. The envisioned unity of the British Empire gave the Lagos educated elite the inspiration to utilise the cultural framework of Yoruba practice and thought, and later the political framework of Nigeria, in order to re-order their society. The experiences of the British Empire in Lagos were disseminated through the local press. The British Empire was described in various ways: as a big organisation to which Lagos/Yoruba/Nigeria belonged; as a provider of modernisation; as guardian of rights and justice; as an object of criticism. As will be shown, the Lagos press used the idea of the British Empire as the ideology with which to unify its own society, and consequently contributed to the construction of identity as Yoruba and later Nigerian. This chapter also examines Yoruba ethnogenesis in secular public space,<sup>255</sup> such as voluntary associations relating to British Empire ceremonies, rather than in the religious activities that Peel (2000) focuses on.

Following the annexation of Lagos by Britain in 1861, British public ceremonies, such as Queen Victoria’s birthday, were conducted annually (or sometimes

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<sup>255</sup> Although this thesis particularly focuses on secular associational activities, it has to be noted that supposed religious ceremonies were sometimes used as secular events. For instance, a Muslim festival, Feast of Sacrifices, in 1894 was attended by ten thousand Muslim men as well as “the crowds of spectators—pagan, and Christians, European and Natives—who were drawn to the spot to witness the proceedings” of the Imam (LWR, 16 June 1894, 2).

irregularly).<sup>256</sup> As well as “the opening of new schools, the weddings, the missionary meetings, the concerts”, British public ceremonies became one of the “main social events” amongst the educated elite (Ajayi [1965] 1969a, 63). As Morgan and Hawkins (2004) suggest, for many of the educated elite, “the British Empire was a remote entity, often as much a product of their own imaginations and yearnings as it was the product of imperial hegemony” (13). This was predominantly because the majority of the educated elite in Lagos had acquired a Christian education as well as British culture and customs. They were even mocked as “Black Englishmen”; however, as we will see in the following sections, this protestation of loyalty cannot be interpreted as mere affection for imperial authority; although the Lagos press responded enthusiastically to British Empire ceremonies, it often used these opportunities for the benefit of local interests.

This chapter has three main purposes. First, it examines the public ceremonies of the British Empire, such as the Colonial and Indian Exhibition, Queen Victoria’s Jubilees, and Empire Day celebrations between 1880 and 1920. Such an analysis will be carried out through the meticulous examination of Lagos newspaper descriptions, particularly concerning relevant voluntary associations in Lagos. This chapter also considers another aspect; that of searching for unity in class-divided Lagos society—which has been the main theme of this thesis—and contributes to the understanding of the social history of the British Empire at its periphery. While emphasising unity of the society, the newspaper descriptions of the ceremonies of the British Empire also shows educated elite’s attempt to maintain their cultural privilege, namely, proximity to colonial power and enlightenment.

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<sup>256</sup> The first reported celebration of Queen’s birthday in Lagos was that of 1881 (LT, 25 May 1881, 3).

Second, this chapter is to contribute to the debates surrounding the formation of Yoruba identity. I aim to demonstrate how an envisioned framework of the British Empire provided inspiration and an ideological base for the idea of the “oneness of Yoruba”, with which the Lagos press attempted to encourage social cohesion and the economic improvement of society. In the late nineteenth century, the meaning of the term Yoruba remained ambiguous since it sometimes referred to one of the ethnic groups in Yorubaland—the Oyo—and at other times referred to the whole of Yorubaland/Yoruba-speaking people in a collective sense (Peel 1989, 204-205). By examining the usage of the word “Yoruba” in Lagos newspapers, this chapter illustrates how the Lagos press normalised and popularised the term “Yoruba” in a “pan-Yoruba” sense through reports of conflicts in the Lagos hinterland, as well as in articles on British Empire celebrations, like Queen Victoria’s Jubilees. It shows that the 1880s and 1890s were a critical period for change in the usage of the term “Yoruba” as described in Lagos newspapers.

Third, this chapter will explore the attitudes of the Lagos press towards WWI. The subject of the First World War has received relatively cursory treatment in literature on Nigerian history. As Osuntokun (1979) points out, the subject of WWI has become submerged by the attention paid to analyses of the indirect rule of the Lugard Administration, although Nigerian military operations in the Cameroons and East Africa have been examined by military and official historians.<sup>257</sup> Aside from Osuntokun (1979), who examines the effects of the war on economic and socio-political development in Nigeria and focuses on revolts in Nigeria during 1914-1918, only passing attention has been paid to the Lagos educated elite’s response to World War I.

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<sup>257</sup> For studies on Nigerian military operations in the Cameroons and East Africa during WWI, see the bibliography in Osuntokun (1979).

Despite growing opposition to the Lugard administration, various voluntary associations, in support of the British forces, were established. With this taken into consideration, I would like to highlight how the Lagos press described contradictory ideas: on the one hand, growing dissatisfaction with the Lugard administration and, on the other, encouraging contributions to the war relief funds in support of a war of the British Empire. With this in mind, this chapter provides an additional perspective, and explores how an envisioned framework of Empire unity justified the Allies, British side, and encouraged contributions to war relief funds. The idea of imperial unity, accordingly, inspired the idea of a “United Nigeria”, which encouraged the later Nigerian nationalist movement. The shared theme in the second and third purposes is that the envisioned framework of Empire provided the inspiration for the idea of a united Yoruba and Nigeria, which the Lagos press highlighted in order to transcend tensions between different groups—according to ethnic origins, political view, denominations, occupational and economic backgrounds—for the progress of society.

This chapter is mostly arranged chronologically. Section 2, the Celebrations of the British Empire in 1880-1899 Lagos, has two parts: Part 1 examines the activities of the Lagos Executive Committee for the Colonial and Indian Exhibition in 1886, and the self-representation of one member of the Lagos educated elite, J. A. Payne, as a “black Englishman” during his travels to Senegal, South America and England. It focuses on how the experiences of an “imperial visitor” were broadcast in Lagos, and occasionally in British newspapers. Importantly, “much has been written about Britons who travelled through colonial places, reporting their observations and impressions” (Lambert and Lester 2006, 1), and there are studies on the presence of Africans in Britain.<sup>258</sup> However,

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<sup>258</sup> The African presence in Britain has been studied since the 1970s, and several important studies appeared, especially in the 1990s, such as David Killingray, ed. 1994. *Africans in Britain*,

we know significantly less about Africans who travelled in nineteenth century Britain. Part 2 focuses on the newspaper descriptions of Queen Victoria's Golden and Diamond Jubilee celebrations in Lagos. Section 3, "Pacification" of Yorubaland and Usage of Yoruba in Lagos Newspapers, deals with the attitude of the Lagos press to expansion of the British sphere of influence, and how this influenced the Lagos hinterland, as well as the gradual change in usage of the word "Yoruba" from the late nineteenth century. Section 4, Making Imperial Citizens, focuses on Empire Day celebrations, which began as a commemoration of the achievement of the British Empire from 1905 in Lagos. Section 5—WWI, 1914-1918: The War for Protecting the Empire Unity and "United Nigeria"—is broken down into three parts. Part 1 explores the activities and representations of war relief funds during WWI, part 2 focuses on pro-British and anti-German propaganda during WWI and part 3 examines growing nationalism and interest in Japan during and post-WWI. Finally, Section 6 summarises the arguments detailed above.

## **6.2. The Celebrations of the British Empire in 1880-1899 Lagos**

### **6.2.1. Colonial and Indian Exhibition and J. A. Payne's Trip in 1886**

The Colonial and Indian Exhibition was opened by Her Majesty the Queen and Empress of India in the Royal Horticultural Society's garden at South Kensington on May 4 1886 with the view that illustrating and recording "the marvellous development" of the Empire "may give a stimulus to the commercial interests and intercourse of all parts of" the British colonies "by encouraging the arts of peace and industry, and by

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*Special Issue of the Journal Immigrants & Minorities* (London: F. Cass).

strengthening the bonds of Union” which were apparent in the Empire (Cundall 1886, 12-13). The exhibition took place for six months and attracted 5.5 million visitors from both inside and outside England until its closure in October of the same year. Furthermore, while earlier exhibitions had treated exhibits from abroad as international industrial expositions in 1851 and 1862, exhibitions from the 1880s became increasingly orientated towards imperial interests, and the theme subsequently transformed to imperial and colonial display (Mackenzie 1984, 99). The Colonial and Indian Exhibition of 1886 was the first imperial “official” exhibition funded by the British government (ibid, 102). It was hugely successful and brought together in one place, London, a collection of exhibits demonstrating the commercial, industrial, and cultural achievement of the various parts of the British Empire. There were exhibit sections devoted to India, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, South and West Africa, the West Indies, Burmah [sic], Ceylon, Malta, Cyprus, Gibraltar, Hong Kong, North Borneo, and the Falkland Islands. Every colony published a catalogue of exhibits in its own court, together with accompanying explanatory handbooks.

In Lagos, this Colonial and Indian Exhibition became one of the first occasions for the educated elite to feel that they were part of the British Empire and also to demonstrate their position in the British Empire. Some of the educated elite visited London in order to attend the exhibition, and their experiences in the empire’s metropole were jubilantly broadcast in the Lagos press. In this section, I will explore the project of self-representation by the Lagos Executive Committee for the Exhibition and that by John Otonba Payne who travelled to England in 1886.

In February 1885, the circular was sent from a Royal Commission of the Exhibition in London, which invited contributions and “cordial co-operation and support of all the Residents” in the Gold Coast Colony, of which Lagos was a part

(E&LC, 28 February 1885, 3). For the purpose of securing “worthy and adequate” exhibits by which to represent the Lagos colony, the Lagos Executive Committee for the Exhibition was organised in October 1885, with the following nine members: Justice Smalman Smith, Consul Hood, Consul Heldbeck, C. J. George, J. D. Fairley, A. R. Elliott, J. J. Thomas, J. A. Payne, and W. Shitta<sup>259</sup> (E&LC, 24 October & 14 November 1885, 3). For the following three months, the Lagos Executive Committee advertised for articles which were considered to provide an appropriate and appreciable collection of products to represent the Lagos colony. The Colonial and Indian Exhibition was favourably described as a possible means to opening up to “the British Colonial World... [as] a field for the display of native industry and ingenuity, and well might this Colony embrace the opportunity [to] enhance the products of our soil, and our native endeavours” (LO, 6 February 1886, 2).

In February 1886, the Lagos Executive Committee of the Colonial and Indian Exhibition made arrangements to enable the inhabitants and other residents of Lagos to view the articles such as, brass works, furniture, carvings, masks and drums, which had been purchased or offered for the exhibition before shipping to England. The articles were exhibited for the “public of Lagos” at the Government Store at Marina for three days, from 1 February 1886; the display was free to view, which provided the residents of Lagos with the opportunity to determine whether or not the articles collected were appropriate for the exhibition (E&LC, 23 January 1886, 4). Attending the “highly commendable” preview of the collected articles, the *Observer* jubilantly commented:

one could not but contemplate on what the spectacle would have been, if a full

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<sup>259</sup> The members of the committee were mixture of European and educated Africa elite in Lagos. I was not able to trace profiles of all members, but at least C. J. George, J. J. Thomas, J. A. Payne and W. Shitta are of African origin.

and complete ingathering had been made of the vast products of West Africa... we should take courage and entertain hopes for the future when all Africans shall begin to take a forward move in the march of enlightenment, then and not till then will the Colonies vie with each other in the showing of their several products and industries in the European world (6 February 1886, 2).

At the Colonial and Indian Exhibition from May 1886, the exhibits from Lagos were displayed in the West African Court section on the northern half of the Queen's gate Annexe, together with the articles from Sierra Leone, Gambia and the Gold Coast (see Plate 8). With efforts from the Lagos Executive Committee for the Exhibition, it was reported that "the consignment" was "large and extensive in character, consisting of specimens of all kinds of articles of native workmanship and agricultural production", including the display of silk fibre, brass anklets, brass armlets, the Koran printed on silk, cowries box, articles brought by Joseph Thomson who travelled the Niger river area, and photographs taken by him (E&LC, 29 May 1886, 2-3; LO, 5 June 1886, 3; *The Times*, 17 July 1886, 13).<sup>260</sup>

However, the reception of West African exhibits by the audience was not always a positive one: one of the visitors from Lagos, James Johnson was disappointed by the quality of exhibits from West Africa compared to those from other colonies, and commented by stating, "I know of no intelligent Native African who saw the Exhibition who did not feel ashamed of and was not humiliated by it".<sup>261</sup> He even felt annoyance that the "native African made cloths exhibited... were of the poorest and most meagre description",<sup>262</sup> and was further displeased that the exhibited cloths were manufactured

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<sup>260</sup> Catalogues on exhibition courts of each colonies with general information about the colony and instructions for exhibits and their providers, was distributed by the British government. For a Catalogue of the West Africa Court see (Payne 1886, 181-191)

<sup>261</sup> Letter from James Johnson to H. Holand, 26 July 1887, C.O. 267/369 (quoted in Ayandele 1970, 308).

<sup>262</sup> Ibid.



by the Europeanised people along the West African coast, rather than by “uncontaminated peoples in the interior, whose products, he believed, would have compared well with those of other parts of the British Empire” (Ayandele 1970, 308).

With the aforementioned taken into consideration, it would be useful to consider reports on West African exhibits by the British press and compare these with those by the Lagos press. According to *The Times* (London), the decorations of this section was considered to be “an appropriate barbaric character, in black and gold, relieved with devices taken from native pattern” (quoted in E&LC, 29 May 1886, 2-3). The West African Court was “the ethnologist’s paradise. Mumbo Jumbo with his gods and his gauds has taken complete possession of the court. Even palm oil is nowhere in presence of the barbaric display”. The description, with a strong slant towards social Darwinism, continued:

Everywhere about we see fetishes in all degrees of hideousness; wooden millet mortars; utensils of brass and clay of the rudest designs; drums; stringed instruments which look like the common ancestors of the banjo, the fiddle, and the tambourine; primitive weapons of all kinds; models of native houses and villages; cloths of all degrees of elaboration; jewellery of true barbaric clumsiness (*The Times*, 17 July 1886, 13).

Whilst “both interesting and instructive”, “slovenliness” was reported to have “reflected in the character and get-up of the exhibits in the West African Court”. The only exhibits by which *The Times* was impressed were those from the Gold Coast, i.e., “striking and attractive” gold ornaments and “Aggrey beads”.<sup>263</sup> Amongst the exhibits from the

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<sup>263</sup> Aggrey beads are relics of the ancient trade between the West African coast and Central and Northern Africa, each of which cost £4.10s (*The Times*, 17 July 1886, 13).

Lagos section, a praise verse by Geroldo Samuel, a calligraphist of Brazilian<sup>264</sup> origin, was the only exhibit that could attract *The Times*. We can see the following “creditably written and ornamented” verse entitled, “God save the Queen”, as the example of “genuine loyalty” of the people in colonies which *The Times* were keen show to its British readers:

Victoria, Queen of the favoured isles,  
In India honoured, in Africa blest;  
Could'st thou but lend thy listening ears awhile  
To Africa's voice, thou knowest best her behest.  
Off on Albion's shore from Africa coast  
Receive the fruits of toil and jeopardy.  
In vain the cynics talk, nought is their boast.  
Africa loves thee, Queen of Liberty! (ibid)

As opposed to rather critical reports of *The Times*, the *Eagle* decided to ignore these adverse views and instead to introduce the only favourable view from the *African Times* (May 1886), which provided a full description of exhibits with the name of exhibitors<sup>265</sup> in the Lagos Section and commented:

The inhabitants of Lagos, poth [sic:both] native and European, must have been most zealous in working for the honour of their Settlement, judging from the almost endless number and variety of objects now on view (quoted in E&LC, 29 May 1886, 2-3).

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<sup>264</sup> *The Times* mentioned that “the most industrious and best behaved of the non-European population of Lagos are those blacks who have been slaves in Brazil or the descendants of such. The “Portuguese quarter... is the best part of the town, with well-built and ornamented houses, an indication perhaps that slavery in Brazil has had on the whole a good effect on the natives” (*The Times*, 17 July 1886, 13).

<sup>265</sup> People in Lagos who contributed to the Exhibition and their exhibits can be found in the *African Times*, May 1886 (quoted in E&LC, 29 May 1886, 2-3).

Despite the prejudiced and rather critical descriptions in the British press, the Lagos press was generally satisfied with Lagos' presence in the exhibition. At the closure of the Exhibition, it was reported that most of the visitors from colonies who had been experiencing "unprecedented receptions" during the Exhibition would return to their distant homes, "with lively impressions not soon to be erased of their stay in England" (E&LC, 9 & 23 October 1886, 3).

Noteworthy is that the enthusiasm of the educated elite and press to demonstrate their existence in the British Empire gradually declined in the early twentieth century. A transformation in their loyalty and in enthusiasm can be observed in the description of another Colonial and Indian Exhibition in 1905, which was merely reported as one of the events in Britain. The 1905 Exhibition was described as, "the means of bringing more prominently before the British public the richness of the soil, the varied products, and the possibilities of future development of British West Africa", and could show that "Southern Nigeria Natives, with their primitive appliances" were not "behind the white man in skill". However, only one editorial was devoted to this subject and it projected much less enthusiasm than that of 1886; moreover, there was no mention of the collective efforts of the Lagos educated elite to display their existence in the British Empire (LS, 6 September 1905, 4).

**Plate 8: Colonial and Indian Exhibition, 1886: A View of the West African Court**



[Source: Payne 1887]

The educated elite not only contributed to the Colonial and Indian Exhibition in 1886 by collecting what they thought to be “appropriate” exhibits to represent the Lagos colony, but groups of them also attended the Exhibition in London. As the *African Times* reported, “a striking feature of the Exhibition was the presence of representatives of all the Colonies of the Empire, in their native costume” (quoted in LO, 5 June 1886, 3). Together with visitors from “all the Colonies of the Empire”, several “native gentlemen” and women from Lagos, such as Mr. and Mrs. J. A. O. Payne, Mr. and Mrs. J. J. Thomas, Miss Thomas, Mr. N. T. B. Shepherd, Mr. and Mrs. S. J. George, Mr. Z. A. Williams, R. B. Blaize and James Johnson, visited Britain for the Colonial and Indian Exhibition (E&LC, 9 & 23 October 1886, 3).

Most notable among the visitors from Lagos were Mr. and Mrs. Payne, both of whom arrived in London in June, 1886. The Paynes left Lagos on 21 February 1886, and arrived at Southampton on May 29, 1886, via Sierra Leone, Senegal, Montevideo (Uruguay), Brazil, Lisbon, and Vigo (Spain). During their four-month long stay in England,<sup>266</sup> they had invitations for dinners and banquets,<sup>267</sup> the Parliament House, and had the chance to take the train courtesy of the railway company. Their visits to several associations, including the CMS, the Empire Lodge of Ancient Freemasons, the Civil Service Prayer Union and the Committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society, were reported in the Lagos press in the column titled “Our West African Friends in London” (E&LC, 24 July & 9 August 1886, 2-3; 9 & 23 October 1886, 3).

On 25 June 1886, the Paynes were invited to a levee at St. James’s Palace and to a Grand Colonial Reception and Ball at Guild Hall, hosted by the Prince of Wales and the Lord Mayor and Corporation of London respectively. At the Grand Colonial Reception and Ball, they were also invited with 4,500 other “Colonial and Indian visitors”, and reported, as far as the *Eagle* believed, by the *Daily Chronicle* as “a remarkable couple... a dark coloured lady and gentleman of true African type, the former wearing a black satin dress with red roses, and the latter a uniform of some kind”. At the dinner on June 29, 1886, they had an opportunity to meet H. R. H. the Prince of Wales, who was the Executive President of the Royal Commission of the Colonial and Indian Exhibition, along with 450 other guests. It was joyfully reported that, “His Royal Highness graciously shook hands with several of the Colonists, including our African guests”

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<sup>266</sup> Payne and his wife arrived at Southampton on 29 May 1886, and left England for France on 4 October 1886 by way of Dover and Calais (Payne 1886, 143; Payne 1887, 144).

<sup>267</sup> Payne had invitations by the following figures: Sir James Marshall, C.M.G.; Sir Thomas and Lady Brassey; Duke of Bedford; Sir Philip Cunliffe Owen, K.C.M.G. (E&LC, 24 July & 9 August 1886, 2-3). Payne was also invited to a banquet organised by the “Worshipful Company of Ironmongers... as well as the Colonial and Indian delegates” on 21 July 1886 (E&LC, 28 August 1886).

(E&LC, 24 July & 9 August 1886, 2-3).

Not only the Lagos press but also the British press was interested in this visitor from Africa. *The Times* of 17 July 1886 had a special article devoted to the West African Colonies at the Colonial Exhibition, and introduced Payne with the following comment with a mixture of admiration and condescension. Payne was described as a bright example of the success of British civilisation in the colonies, but the report below was not be free from a sense of racial superiority:

Everyone who has resided for any time in any of our West African colonies must be familiar with instances of natives who in education and intelligence have attained the European average. There are black Judges who might well be intrusted with the administration of County Court business, at least; and one visitor from West African to the Exhibition, Mr. John A. Payne, is a bright example of an intelligent and well-educated business man, who differs only in colour from an average Englishman of the same class. Mr. Payne, we may say, is the compiler and publisher of the “Lagos and West Africa Almanack and Diary”, now in its 13th year of issue. It is a large-sized book of some 180 pages, abounding with useful information, and of much value to any one desirous of becoming familiar with the actual condition of West Africa.

As mentioned in Chapter 2, every Lagos press had small sections in each paper to report departures and arrivals of civil servants and the educated elite from England, other West African countries, and the Lagos hinterland. As well as intellectual ties with educated Africans in other parts of British West Africa, members of the educated elite in southern Nigeria had blood relations and extended families in coastal areas of Sierra Leone, the Gold Coast and sometimes abroad, visiting each other.<sup>268</sup> There was a limited but a growing number of individuals who travelled and stayed in England for

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<sup>268</sup> Payne’s wife was originally from Sierra Leone and visited there on various occasions. Payne also had an uncle in Brazil.

either study purposes or for business,<sup>269</sup> although the Lagos press often pointed out the ill-effects of sending youths for education in Britain or America.<sup>270</sup> Moreover, some of the educated elite's experiences in Britain were shared amongst the elite members of Lagos through the medium of contemporary newspapers.

Payne's trip was in the first instance reported as a series in the Lagos press. The information seems to have been sent by Payne himself, and the detail of his travel was broadcast, particularly in the *Eagle*, the paper with more interest in the individual lives of the educated elite in Lagos. Payne left Lagos on 21 February 1886, on the steamship *Sherbro*, and returned on 20 December 1886. On his departure, the Lagos press regretted "the prospect of losing his familiar pleasant features for a short period" but, at the same, wished "our esteemed friend" and "our respected townsman" and his wife a "pleasant voyage, great enjoyment in their continental tour and a safe return into our midst" (E&LC, 13 February 1886, 4; LO, 20 February 1886, 3).

Payne and his wife arrived in the French Colony of Senegal on 6 March and visited Dakar and St. Louis. On 9 March, they paid a visit to His Excellency the Governor in Chief of Senegal, Alphonse Seignac Lesseps, and his wife at Government House. On 15 March, they embarked for the Republic Oriental de Uruguay, Monte Video, South America (LO, 15 & 22 May 1886, 2-3). With the description of Payne's

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<sup>269</sup> Apart from elite males, like James Johnson, who stayed in England for six months in 1876 (Payne 1877, 52), Mann (1985) suggests that several elite females, such as the wives of Otonba Payne and James Johnson, studied in Britain. Martha Bonifacia Lydia Payne was a sister of J. P. L. Davies, a wealthy merchant. She was educated at the Church Missionary Society's Female Institution, in Sierra Leone, and in England "under the care of the Rev. J. F. Schön of Chatham" (LO, 12 May 1888, 3).

<sup>270</sup> For instance, the *Lagos Standard* discussed on 4 May 1904, that the absence of educational facilities in Africa had "given rise to the practice of sending native youths to England for higher education". The result of "a long and close acquaintance with foreign habits and modes of thought, his training and surroundings", was "usually to imbue the native youth with ideas which tend to make him dissatisfied with his surroundings on his return home, destroy his race pride, and cause him to look down with contempt upon the customs and institution of his own country" (2). For more about educated Africans who acquired education in Europe, see (LWR, 4 April 1908, 3; 31 July 1909, 4-5; 14 August 1909, 4).

travel, the *Eagle* proudly reported that “natives” in inland Lagos were more advanced than those in Senegal:

the vast tract of land [in Senegal] seems to be rich but the natives care little or nothing about agriculture, unlike the Egba, Jebu, Yoruba [Oyo] and other tribes in the interior of Lagos; their principal and only produce is Ground-nuts. Their residence and mode of living are not to be compared to those of the Lagos and interior tribes the latter being superior in every respect; they have no idea what improvement is, at least, no desire to improve themselves (E&LC, 10 April 1886, 2-3).

In this way, Payne was represented as a member of globalized elite society and simultaneously as a member of the British Empire. In addition, Payne himself was not free of the Victorian idea of “enlightenment”/“improvement” and showed condescension to peoples he categorised as having lower “civilisation”, such as people in Senegal and Brazil. He frequently emphasised the advancement in the Yoruba hinterland compared with indigenous societies in Senegal and Brazil.

They arrived at the Republic Oriental de Uruguay, Monte Video, South America, on 27 March, and were entertained by Rev. J. Henry Davis, the British Consular Chaplain at a dinner, and also visited several places. On 1 April, they embarked for England via Rio de Janeiro, Bahia and Lisbon (LO, 15 & 22 May 1886). Furthermore, on 4 April 1886, Payne stayed at his uncle’s house in Rua do Hospiciol, near the public garden in Rio de Janeiro (Payne 1886, 140). Their visit was reported in four Brazilian newspapers: the *Rio News*, the *Gazeta da Tarde*, the *Opaiz* and the *Diario de Noticia*. Subsequently, after staying in England for four months, the Paynes visited Paris via Dover and Calais on 4 October. Their visit was recorded in the *Journal des Mine*: As “a member for a long time of the Société de Géographie Commerciale de Paris”, Payne



was welcomed by the president of the society and visited various places of interest in Paris, Versailles, and Boulogne (Payne 1887, 144).

After his trip, Payne enhanced his position in the Lagos Colonial Government as well as in Lagos elite society. He frequently mentioned his travel of 1886 at the meetings of various associations and in his letters to Lagos newspapers. It seems that Payne actively used his special experience to confirm his elite position and respectability. In 1887, Payne informed the *Eagle* that, in return for presenting his *Almanack* to Queen, he had received a letter from Her Majesty's Private Secretary with a detailed description of how he was welcomed by British nobilities (E&LC, 9 & 30 April 1887). In the obituary of Payne's wife, Martha Bonifacia Lydia Payne, their trip was repeated and even reconstructed in a way expanding the Paynes' image. While the *Rio News* had reported that Payne was allowed an interview with Emperor of Brazil at Rio de Janeiro on 24 April (E&LC, 29 May 1886, 3), in the obituary, the story was reconstructed and it was reported that they had been royally entertained by the Emperor of Brazil but "owing to the shortness of their stay they were obliged to decline His Majesty's kind invitation to spend a few days with him and the Empress at one of their country residences"; moreover, in England, "they had a very pleasant time and were warmly greeted and entertained by the Nobility and Gentry. They visited many places of historical interest including Windsor Castle to which they were invited by command of Her Majesty the Queen". While this was true, the obituary omitted the fact that the Paynes had received these invitations along with 4,500 other domestic and colonial visitors (LO, 12 May 1888, 2-3).

In 1888, Payne officially changed his name from John Augustus Payne to John

Augustus Otonba Payne, which reflected his Ijebu origin:<sup>271</sup> “Otonba” was an abbreviation of “Otun Oba”, which means adviser of the oba (chief), and he gradually came to emphasise his blood connection with the Ijebu royal family. Following this trip, his change of name can be seen as being related to the change in his way of self-representation, from respectable Black Englishman to Ijebu royal family. This change can also be seen in *Payne’s Lagos and West African Almanack and Diary*, which was published from 1874 to 1893.<sup>272</sup>

#### 6.2.2. Queen Victoria’s 1887 Golden Jubilee and 1897 Diamond Jubilee

Regarding the subjects of the British Empire in colonial Lagos the most evident expression of loyalty was, undoubtedly, during Queen Victoria’s two jubilees: the Golden Jubilee, which occurred in 1887, and the Diamond Jubilee, which occurred in 1897. During these celebrations the Lagos press was flooded with images of the Queen and the accompanying imperial propaganda. It was reported in the Lagos newspapers that people in Lagos enthusiastically responded to these opportunities to profess love for the British monarch; however, as will be shown in this section, these displays of loyalty “should not be interpreted as the product of a simple, unmediated absorption of an imperial creed” (Bickford-Smith 2004, 200). The two jubilees were described in relation to not only the unity of the British Empire but also as an accelerator of a sense of solidarity within Lagos society, and later, within Yoruba countries. By reporting the

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<sup>271</sup> Payne was an anglicised version of the Yoruba name Adepayin, and was a member of Gbelegbuwa Royal House of Ijebu-Ode. In 1956, *West Africa* reported that “the present Awujale of Ijebu-Ode lived in the Payne household when he was an apprentice tailor in Lagos” (*The West Africa*, 14 January 1956; Kopytoff 1965, 295-96; Echeruo 1977, 37).

<sup>272</sup> Sawada, Nozomi. 2005. “Progress” as Described by a “Black Englishman” in the British Colony of Lagos: Otonba Payne’s Almanack [in Japanese] *Komaba Journal of Area Studies* 9.

importance of unity, which was represented by people gathering for celebrations, the Lagos press attempted to remind people of the necessity of unity in Lagos society and Yorubaland.

As David Cannadine ([1983] 2007) explains, Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee was a carefully planned manipulation by the British Government with the objective of enhancing the reputation of the monarch, which was, at the time, considered to be endangered. After the death of her beloved consort, Prince Albert, in 1861, the Queen resisted any encouragement to play a public role and appeared only a few times in public, until 1876 when she was proclaimed Empress of India. As a result of the absence of the Queen and scandals relating to the Prince of Wales, the popularity of the monarch waned and republican associations proliferated in the early 1870s. Many politicians, like Benjamin Disraeli (1804-1881), who acknowledged a need for a charismatic monarch, utilised pageants as a way of encouraging people's loyalty to the monarch by disseminating positive images of the Queen through the media and via use of commodities. It was once even considered risky to present the Queen at the Golden Jubilee celebration because of her unpopularity; however, the ceremony, nevertheless, was a great success. During the two jubilees, the "spectacular image of Victoria finally overwhelmed the living image of the melancholy Queen" (Richards 1987, 32). This conscious manipulation of Queen Victoria's image changed the performance and meaning of the royal rituals, from "private and of limited appeal" to "splendid, public and popular" imperial events (Cannadine [1983] 2007, 120).<sup>273</sup> As a result, it transformed a domestic Queen into an imperial matriarch — a familiar and idealised

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<sup>273</sup> It is pointed out that the spectacle of royal ceremonies acquired more importance as the political power of the monarch waned. Despite the fact that during the first three-quarters of the nineteenth century the majority of royal pageants "oscillated between farce and fiasco" the meanings of rituals developed and expanded dramatically from the late 1870s (Cannadine [1983] 2007, 117).

icon of the British Empire.

Despite the petulant widowhood of the Queen in real life, a representation of her as an affectionate mother of the Empire was successfully disseminated by the media. Metaphors and narratives of the Queen as a mother of her people, and of the Empire as a family, functioned as efficient tools in the justification of an imperialist ideology (Cannadine [1983] 2007).<sup>274</sup> Moreover, such ideology served to increase the appeal of the British monarchy and the British Empire in her colonies, and this can be seen in the description of Lagos as a child of England in the address of the Junior Jubilee Committee, which expressed the most enthusiastic loyalty and gratitude to British guardianship:

Lagos became an adopted child of England (be it remembered at the sacrifice of some of Her Noblest blood) not for any commercial advantages to England, not to secure for England a military station, fame and glory, but she was brought to birth entirely for philanthropic purposes. First, the suppression of the slave trade. Second, the free propagation of the Gospel of Our Most Blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ (E&LC, July 1887, 3).

As later sections of this chapter demonstrate, representation of the British Empire as a “motherly country” continued throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

The educated elite in Lagos fervently responded to this royal event, organising the Senior Jubilee Committee, the Junior Jubilee Committee and the Women’s Jubilee

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<sup>274</sup> In the address of the Women’s Jubilee Society of Lagos to His Excellency the Governor on 24 June 1887, we can see the Queen’s representation as a model of highly “respectable” and motherly woman: “We are particularly desirous of acknowledging on this auspicious occasion the many good qualities by which Her Majesty has ennobled womanhood and made herself an example to every age and condition of her sex; a dutiful daughter, a good wife, a loving mother, and, herself not unacquainted with sorrows, a great sympathizer with others” (E&LC, July 1887, 2).

Society for its preparation. Participation in the Jubilee committees was an ideal opportunity for the educated elite to display and demonstrate their respectability and position in society. The Senior Jubilee Committee consisted of the “upper ten” of the society; including J. A. Payne, C. J. George and R. B. Blaize. The Junior Jubilee Committee, whose leading members included Herbert Macaulay, William Fitzgerald and Hector Willoughby, expressed the most enthusiastic loyalty to the British Empire, as will be demonstrated later on. The “elder Sierra Leonean” ladies, otherwise known as “Big Sisters”, such as Mrs. Payne, Mrs. R. B. Blaize and Rebecca Johnson, formed the Women’s Jubilee Society (LO, 2 & 9 July 1887, 5). The Senior Jubilee Committee worked together with the Glover Memorial Hall Association and ultimately decided to lay the foundation stone of the Glover Memorial Hall on the second day of the Golden Jubilee celebration on 21 June 1887. However, aside from holding banquets and sending messages to the Governor of Lagos, few other activities were reported. The Golden Jubilee was a festival occasion for Lagos residents rather than a commemoration ceremony, which was the main objective of voluntary associations at the time of the Diamond Jubilee in 1897.

For a few weeks, around 20 June 1887, the celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Her Majesty Queen Victoria’s accession to the throne took place in Lagos. There was a masquerade ball, held by the Colonial Government, several banquets given by the Mechanics Association and the Ladies Social Club, a treat for 1,200 school children comprising cakes, buns, puddings and sweets, and a “musical prize competition” for the elite ladies (E&LC, 14 & 28 February 1887, 2). The Golden Jubilee was reported with jubilant expressions: there had never been, within the annals of Lagos island, “such a universal season of gaiety and joy, when all that Lagos can boast of the beautiful, the fair, the brave and the noble, indiscriminately assemble with the rabble and populace to

commemorate any one common object” (LO, 2 & 9 July 1887, 2). The rejoicing Lagos press reported details of the Jubilee celebrations, even providing a diagram of the table, complete with names of the guests at the State Banquet in Government House on 21 June 1887 (ibid, 3). The *Lagos Observer*’s description of the celebration banquet repeated number 50, which symbolised the long reign of Queen Victoria. It was reported that everything was arranged by fifties at the banquet in order to symbolise the 50 years of Her Majesty’s reign:

Fifty representative guests were invited; fifty were present; fifty sat down at the Banquet, fifty flags decorated the dining hall, fifty lamps adorned the Queen’s illuminated portrait, and fifty Chinese Lanterns dispelled the darkness in the Garden... fifty wine glass were filled, fifty stood up, fifty hands were raised in a bumper, and fifty glasses were emptied at one and the same time (ibid).

There were two characteristics present in newspaper descriptions of Queen Victoria’s Golden Jubilee. First, the Jubilee gave the Lagos press the opportunity to look back over previous years and, accordingly, confirm the material and moral progress achieved by the Colonial Government. The Golden Jubilee was reported as an important event for “the annals of Lagos island” and the Lagos press emphasised pride in the materially and morally “civilised” society of Lagos. Amongst members of the elite, the attachment of individuals to Britain varied considerably; however, it seems that there was a consensus amongst the educated elite that Lagos had achieved significant material improvement under the sovereignty of the Queen. Even the *Observer* — which tended to have a relatively anti-governmental standpoint — admitted:

Lagos affords a brilliant example of the happy results of Queen Victoria’s reign. The moral condition of this island which erewhile presented the most squalid

scenes of human wretchedness, misery and woe, when it was the emporium of the slave trade, and a very hell of wickedness, has been within such a remarkably short time almost completely transformed to a focus of light to the surrounding countries. In fine [sic], it would be no exaggeration to say, that what Queen Victoria's reign has accomplished for this colony in decided [sic] progress and material advantages in the arts of civilization and commerce would have taken a double period of time to accomplish under the rule of any other monarch (2 & 9 July 1887, 2).

This first point can be seen in the later Diamond Jubilee in 1897 as well as in other British royal ceremonies, such as the Queen's birthday. The Lagos press had continued to look back over previous years and, consequently, confirmed their material progress over the years under the reign of the British Empire, right up until the early twentieth century. The British Empire and the British monarch were represented as providers of modernisation to colonies like Lagos.

Secondly, the Golden Jubilee was described as an accelerator of a sense of solidarity within Lagos society. The Golden Jubilee celebrations were described as events that were not only celebrated amongst Europeans and the educated elite, but also with the participation of the indigenous people. The *Eagle* reported that, "the Jubilee festivities in Lagos are being vigorously pursued with all classes in the community, Christian, Mohamedans, Heathens &c. participating in a celebration ever to be remembered" (May & June 1887, 3). Moreover, the attendance of the indigenous people at the celebration was emphasised. During the celebration banquet at Government House, Governor Moloney mentioned that he had received "a most interesting symbolical message" from someone he described as "an honest, zealous and loyal Yoruba", and "it took the form of fifty cobs of green corn and was symbolical of peace, plenty and loyalty to his Queen". Furthermore, on 5 July 1887, there was an

unsuccessful “demonstration of the native” dance by a person called Giwa at a Fancy Dress Ball in the Old Customs’ Warehouse, (LO, 2 & 9 July 1887, 7). Indigenous women in Lagos and Abeokuta gathered to send “a golden calabash” to Queen Victoria<sup>275</sup> (Brown 1964, 252). Additionally, whole messages, which were sent to Governor Moloney by the groups of Brazilian and Yoruba representatives as well as the aforementioned three Jubilee societies, appeared in the Lagos newspapers. The evidence cited in support of the indigenous loyalty to the Queen can be explained as conditional or merely as a means of promoting their personal interests—perhaps attending the celebration for the feast provided. However, these accounts not only reminded the educated elite of the loyalty of the indigenous people to the Queen but also reinforced a sense of the solidarity of their own society.

As has been discussed, social cleavage caused mutual suspicion and conflict among people in Lagos society, thus the Lagos press had a reason for emphasising the importance of unity. Lagos was a stratified society in which conflicts between several groups of society—such as Europeans, immigrants from Sierra Leone and Brazil, and indigenous people—existed since the early nineteenth century (Brown 1964). In addition, long-lasting conflicts among ethnic groups in the Lagos hinterland, “Yorubaland”, caused mutual suspicion of the educated elite whose places of origin differed. They often had family connections and economic interests with the Lagos

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<sup>275</sup> *The Pall Mall Gazette* reported that the “gold calabash, the Jubilee gift from the Lagos and Abeokuta [sic: Abeokuta] ladies to the Queen” arrived in Liverpool, whose “case and contents weighed 50lb” (13 December 1887). *The Leeds Mercury* also reported, “The Volta brought from Lagos a Jubilee gift for Her Majesty the Queen from the ladies of Lagos and Abeokuta. The gift consisted of a gold calabash, and is said to be worth at least £1,000. The calabash is entirely of native workmanship, and was prompted by the interest taken by Her Majesty and the Royal Family in the native-wrought exhibits from Africa at the Royal Colonial Exhibition last year. The calabash is said to be finely carved, the work being done by the natives living some thirty days and journey in the interior from Lagos, and much pains have been taken to make it a thorough sample of native skill” (12 December 1887).



hinterland that influenced their political attitudes.<sup>276</sup> There was said to be a “constant pressure of tribal affinities” among the *Saro* (Omu 1978, 104-105). This cleavage among the educated elite can be seen from addresses at Queen Victoria’s 1887 Golden Jubilee ceremony, by the “Yoruba Society”<sup>277</sup> and the “Representatives of Yorubaland in Lagos”<sup>278</sup> which appear in July 1887 issues of the *Eagle* and the *Observer* respectively (E&LC, 27 November & 11 December 1886, 3; LO, 2 & 9 July 1887, 7). Despite the fact that the Yoruba Society consisted of the Lagos educated elite of Oyo origin, while “Representatives of Yoruba land in Lagos” were Egba, both groups attempted to portray themselves as the representatives of the whole Yoruba country, which was “composed of various tribes in the Colony of Her Most Gracious Majesty, Queen Victoria” (ibid). They both expressed gratitude to the Colonial Government as “representatives of Yoruba hinterland” for any completed public works, such as the Five Cowrie Creek Bridge, the Lagoon Embankment and Goal Building, and for the gradual establishment of peace in their countries. The *Observer*, whose proprietor, J. Blackall Benjamin, was of Egba origin, failed to report the address given by the Yoruba Society; and the *Eagle*, whose editor and owner, Owen Emerick Macaulay, was of Oyo origin, did not mention the “Representatives of Yoruba land” (LO, 2 & 9 July 1887, 7). Mutual silence in the *Eagle* and *Observer* on the other sub-ethnic group “representatives” of

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<sup>276</sup> “[E]ach sub-section of Yorubaland wanted to use the presence of the British power to resolve the conflict in its favour... The Ijebu in Lagos sought to have their control of trade routes sustained; the Egba citizens in Lagos wanted the Lagos Government to keep clear of their right to act as middlemen between Lagos and Ibadan. The Ibadan people in Lagos, for their part, urged England to *annex* both Ijebuland and Egbaland as a way of opening up the routes to the interior” (Echeruo 1977, 105).

<sup>277</sup> The President of Yoruba Society was Simeon D. Kester. The following are some of the members: Gaspa da Silva, Harrt Randle, Juan E. Corey, John Coker, John Bankole and W. E. Cole (E&LC, 27 November & 11 December 1886, 3).

<sup>278</sup> The members of the “Representatives” consisted of the Egba merchants, like J. S. Leigh, J. W. Cole, T. G. Hoare and James J. Thomas; a school master, I. H. Willoughby; an Egba missionary, J. B. Thomas, and a publisher of the *Observer*, J. B. Benjamin (LO, 2 & 9 July 1887, 7).

Yorubaland shows that there were certain tensions or clashes of interest within the educated elite according to their places of origin.

The conflicts among ethnic groups in the Lagos hinterland, which often disrupted trade, were a big grievance for European officials and merchants, as well as the Lagos educated elite. We can see from the Governor's speech that unity in the Lagos hinterland, known as Yoruba country, was still a goal to be realised. On the day of the Golden Jubilee celebration, Governor Moloney congratulated people on the separation of Lagos from the Gold Coast Colony and British expansion into the hinterland of Lagos and expressed hopes of a termination of conflict between ethnic groups in Yoruba country:

I can trust that such person [Lagos people who were involved conflicts] will see at last the error of their ways and join in heartily to promote in future the consolidation of the peace that has been secured. Toward such an end every **Yoruba** should exert himself, be he Egba, Jebu, Ibadan, Ekiti, Ife or Modakeke. The people of Yoruba territory were divided... their proverbial house has been restored to them. I sincerely trust that your proverb "Igun merin in [sic: ni] Ile Ini"<sup>279</sup> may be applicable to the future relationship of the various tribes and countries *inter alia* of the great Yoruba country, and that as a whole it may become consolidated as one peaceful land, united in language, race, sentiments and fellow interests from which must naturally spring prosperity and contentment (LO, 2 & 9 July 1887, 4).

Next, I would like to consider the descriptions of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897, which was introduced as a memorial day to commemorate sixty years of her reign. It was celebrated more enthusiastically and in a more "splendid" manner,

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<sup>279</sup> *Igun merin ni ile ini* means "a house is composed of four corners (i.e. four walls), and is not otherwise complete". See page 92 in *Nigerian Studies: or the Religious and Political System of the Yoruba* (1910) by R. E. Dennett.

both at home and in overseas colonies, than the previous 1887 Golden Jubilee. The imperial propaganda was successfully disseminated through media and commercialism. The developments in the media, particularly with the advent of the yellow press in England from the 1880s, greatly contributed to promote “the new picture of the monarch as head of the nation” and her Empire. Although there were some anti-monarchical groups at the former Jubilee, this critical feeling had disappeared by the latter and the monarchy was recognised as a beneficial force for uniting the different classes in Britain. As will be shown in the Lagos example, by 1897, the image of Queen Victoria as an imperial monarch was accepted in her colonies. Royal occasions like jubilees were commercially exploited and there was extensive production of royal commemoration pottery, such as mugs and plates (Cannadine [1983] 2007, 122-23; Mackenzie 1984, 4; Richards 1990, 73-118). In Lagos, commercial pictures of the British royal family were distributed in the form of almanacs by Messrs T. A. King & Co. (LS, 12 May 1897, 2). Silver medals were distributed by the Colonial Government. The Jubilee events had the strong constructive power of making of “imperial mentalities”,<sup>280</sup> not only in Britain (Mangan 1990), but, as will be shown, also in a “modest colony” like Lagos.

From the beginning of 1897, the Lagos press had devoted space to the subject of the 60th anniversary of Queen Victoria’s reign in order to “draw the attention of our readers and the public in general to events of interest in the life of a Queen of England who may be regarded as the greatest monarch of the century” (LS, 20 January 1897, 3). The Committee for the Diamond Jubilee Commemoration Fund was appointed in January 1897 “to arrange ways and means for commemorating the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of

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<sup>280</sup> Imperial mentality is a common core of values and attitudes of British citizens, derived from the British Empire, which was shared by the British citizens, especially by those who governed Britain and the Empire (Mangan 1990).

Her Majesty's reign" (LS, 3 February 1897, 2). Only the Christian educated elite were part of the established Jubilee societies at the time of Golden Jubilee in 1887, but the Brazilian and Muslim section of the community participated in this commemoration fund raising movement in 1897 (LS, 17 March 1897, 3). Between February and October, 1897, the Committee for the Diamond Jubilee Commemoration Fund held at least eleven general meetings at the Glover Memorial Hall. The main agenda of the meetings was to encourage fund raising and to discuss "what should be "suitable" commemorative objects for Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee. Lists of subscribers appeared in almost every issue of Lagos newspapers, which attempted to encourage a spirit of competition among educated elite and satisfy the donators' desires to publicise their charitableness, respectability and wealth (LWR, 8 May 1897, 4; LS, 9 June 1897, 2). Long debates on what should become a suitable "Permanent Memorial" continued to appear in Lagos newspapers throughout 1897 even after the Jubilee celebration ceremonies in July. The decision regarding what memorial object would be suitable in Lagos was regarded as a serious one, as this would reflect the level of respect for Queen Victoria but also the degree of civilisation, in both a material and spiritual sense. At the meetings in May, suitable "commemorative monuments" such as a swimming pool, drinking water facility, and a statue were suggested (LS, 7 May 1897, 2; LWR, 29 May 1897, 5). Initially it was decided to build a clock tower and a statue of the Queen at Tinubu Square. However, in June, when Jamaica declined the proposal to erect a statue in their colony, Lagos responded quickly and also rejected the plan.<sup>281</sup> We can see that

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<sup>281</sup> The rhetoric of civilisation is used when "Janus" condemned the proposal to build the Queen's statue in "Lagosian On Dits" column of the *Standard*: "When I wrote against the erection of a statue of the Queen at Tinubu Square as a commemorative memorial I had seen nothing of the account headed "Loyalty stultifies itself" which appears in the *Jamaica Advocate* condemning the procurement of statue of the Queen for Kingston at a sum of £800. If the Queen had wanted a statue she would not have been so plain and distinct in the expression of her sentiment conveyed to the British public by His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales who clearly

the educated elite in Lagos considered their colony to be a member of the British Empire and felt a degree of solidarity with other British colonies, but at the same time, had a competitive feeling towards other British possessions like Jamaica. The Lagos press described that it was the Queen's sincere intention to treat her subjects with compassion: "Lagos cannot afford to ignore and dishonour the wishes of the Queen in this matter, and we are quite sure that the consensus of public opinion will be against such a manifestation of disloyalty" (LWR, 29 May 1897, 5). There were several suggestions that if they were really a "civilised nation", the subscribed money should be used for the relief of "poor subjects" in the community, like building a psychiatric hospital, than for mere monumental displays such as a statue of the Queen (ibid; LS, 2 June 1897, 2). To their disappointment, all the discussions on the use of funds for charitable purposes were in vain when the Colonial Government suggested a plan for construction of the Queen's Garden and refurbishment of the Glover Memorial Hall (LS, 15 September 1897, 3).

The programme of celebrations was also discussed in the Lagos newspapers. The *Record* suggested that the Jubilee programme should be something special for indigenous people (LWR, 12 June 1897, 4). After four months of discussion, the Jubilee Committee published the programme for the celebrations, which was reported as "poor" by the *Standard*. The *Standard* argued that the procession of Kroo men was not appropriate because "Kroo Boys are not Native Yoruba. They are citizens of Liberia. They cannot express our loyalty. They are foreigners to the soil. They can contribute to

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puts it to the many enquirers that Her Majesty would be better pleased with any movement calculated to benefit her poorer subjects. I again condemn most emphatically the proposal to stick up the grave image at Tinubu Square at a cost of £1000... It is not the wisest way nor is it the most commendable way in which, an intelligent community like this should perpetuate the commemoration of so unique, singular and unprecedented event in the history of any **civilised nation**" (LS, 2 June 1897, 2).

the enthusiasm of the people of Yoruba but they cannot be singularised to good effect” (LS, 9 June 1897, 3).

Queen Victoria’s Diamond Jubilee Day was held on 22 June 1897. From 20 to 25 June 1897, various events were carried out for the Jubilee celebrations: thanksgiving services, a Kroomen procession, a Brazilian procession, distribution of alms to the poor, reception of “native chiefs” by the Governor, children’s treats, Governor’s Durbar, horse racing and gymkhana contests with the participation of “10,000 pleasure seekers”, a display of fireworks and illuminations, a picnic for the “native chiefs” on the beach, a “Smoking Concert” and a ball at the Glover Memorial Hall. It was reported, when a sum of forty pounds was distributed to 150 poor people who assembled at the Marina at 7:30 am on 21 May, the “recipients were highly pleased and expressed their gratitude and thanks by wishing the Queen long life in the following tense Yoruba sentence *la Olorun pa oba mo*. (May God keep the Queen)”. The chiefs of Lagos and its hinterland had been invited to Lagos to participate in the celebrations, and during their visit they were shown “all the public institutions and public works undertaken in the Colony”, such as the Colonial Hospital, goals and railways, so that “they would see and appreciate the advantages afforded by British rule and thus make their visit one of both pleasure and profit to them”.

The descriptions of the two Jubilees in Lagos newspapers were similar in the way that they encouraged consideration of both the material and spiritual progress that Lagos had made under British rule. Queen Victoria’s reign was:

an era of wonderful progress: it is the era of railways and ocean travel, of the telegraph, the telephone, the bicycle and the motor car, of missionary aggressiveness and evangelistic wakefulness, of religious and political reforms... The Queen of England has enshrined her gracious self in the hearts of millions of

the Sons of Africa, has won the golden opinions of Moguls of India, and laid the different Nations of the world under a debt. On her “United Empire” the sun never sets (LS, 20 January 1897, 3).

It was also described as an occasion for making people feel consociation with other parts of the British Empire. Jubilee celebrations played a role in increasing the attraction of the British monarchy, and narratives describing the Queen as a mother of her people and of the British Empire can be seen in the reports of both jubilees. However, there were three distinctive points in the newspaper descriptions of the Diamond Jubilee.

First, while the associations organised at the time of Golden Jubilee had the objective of “celebrating” the fiftieth anniversary of Queen Victoria’s reign, those at the time of the Diamond Jubilee aimed at “commemorating” Queen Victoria’s reign, namely, recording the Queen’s Jubilee as one of the events in their own history.

The second point relates to how they conceived their “own” history. The Diamond Jubilee was described as one of the notable events in “Yoruba” history, whereas the previous Golden Jubilee was described as a Lagos event. The *Record* jubilantly reported that “Her Majesty’s Diamond Jubilee” must “forever be marked as a memorable event in **Yoruba history**”:

Never before in the history of the **Yoruba** country has an event occurred so important and general in its interest and so full of significance as the celebrations in honour of the sixtieth anniversary of Her Majesty’s reign which have taken place during the week... The ardour and enthusiasm manifested by **all classes and sections** show that the people as a whole appreciate the importance of rendering memorable an occasion marking the unprecedented duration of a reign which has been so highly auspicious in its effects upon them and their country (LWR, 26 June 1897, 5).

In 1887, conflicts between several ethnic groups in Yorubaland continued, and unity in Yoruba country was still something to be aimed for. By 1897, the “pacification” of the Lagos hinterland had been completed, and Yorubaland began to be described as one “nation” whose people shared the same language, culture and history. As will be discussed in detail, newspaper descriptions of the Diamond Jubilee celebrations emphasised the jubilee as an occasion for people to recognise unity, not only within Lagos, but in “Yoruba Country”. It would appear that a sense of belonging to the British Empire was strengthened through the Jubilee celebrations, and accordingly, it made the Lagos press describe their colony as one entity that should be united.

Thirdly, it was reported, especially in articles on the assembly of chiefs at the Governor’s Durbar, that the jubilee made people aware of the importance and possibility of unity in Yorubaland under the British Empire.<sup>282</sup> The *Record* reported, in its editorial, that the most important lesson learnt from the Diamond Jubilee celebrations was that it taught people “the importance of co-operation and of national unity” by showing the gathering of the “heads and official representatives of all the tribes of Yorubaland now within the British Protectorate and they sat together and rejoiced together, forgetting the heart burning of the past under the reconciling and recuperative shadow of England’s Queen” (26 June 1897, 4).<sup>283</sup> The *Standard* also emphasised the impressiveness of the

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<sup>282</sup> I would like to note that the processions by the Kroomen and the Brazilians could serve as “physical actions and embodiment” that contributed to the creation of an imperial mentality (Bloomfield 1990, 74). However, what Lagos press reported as noticeable among various events relating to the Diamond Jubilee was the Governor’s Durbar.

<sup>283</sup> It was reported that “The native potentates appeared in full state, arrayed in gorgeous and costly native garments with all the panoply and insignias of their various stations and rank, and covered with huge silken umbrellas...Conspicuous amongst those present were, Prince Oyekan of Lagos, the Magaji, and Bashorun of Oyo, and the son of Alafin, the Balogun of Abeokuta, the Olowa of Jebu Ode, the Akaridgo of Jebu Remo, the Bale and Balogun of Ibadan, the Odole of Ilesha, the Ejesi of Ife, Chief Jobe of Aboto, the Oloja of Emuren, the Bale of Oriba, the Bale of Epe, the Bale o Leckie, the Bale of Iragusi, the Bale of Igbonla, the ing of Igbowon, the King of Ilara, the Chief of Badagry, the Bale of Ale, the Balogun of Iwo, the Rasan of Ondo, the Sansare of Idanre, the Olori of Otta, the king of Ilaro, the Balogun of Itele, the King od Bese, the Chief



Durbar in the editorial titled “The Universal Jubilations”:

The idea of a Durbar was most polite and truly marks an epoch in the history of the country... The Durbar stuck the diamond symphony of the celebrations and in lieu of marking periods of time, births of offsprings and marriages of children, by wars and battles, the people of **Yoruba** will henceforth note event by Durbar and Jubilees by Railway Schemes and Governors Tours. The Durbar was a convincing proof to the most dull minded from the hinterland that a change has really come upon the land. It has never happened for crowned heads to come as we say in **Yoruba** “**under one roof**”. Yet we beg leave to say that for the matter there have been too many “crowned heads” in **Yoruba** (7 July 1897, 3).

The experience of solidarity in this Jubilee celebration was described as having had psychological benefits like increasing self-respect and self reliance for chiefs (LWR, 26 June 1897, 4). It was already expected, from the time of the discussions about the jubilee programme, that a gathering of “native chiefs” would persuade the chiefs themselves that they could be “united under the Government of the Queen the paramount object of which is to promote the peace and prosperity of the country as a whole” (LS, 8 May 1897, 4).

In addition, as will be discussed in detail in the next section, the educated elite hoped that the intervention of the British colonial government would terminate the disorganisation of trade in Lagos owing to conflicts among Yoruba ethnic groups. The *Record* believed it was right to entrust the pacification of Yorubaland to the British government and if the Governor of Lagos could prove the value of establishing a “**single Yoruba kingdom** instead of a congeries of small and often hostile states,” then he could annihilate the unfortunate tribal feelings of the people and could bring about

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of Ibs, the Bale of Ojo, the Bale of Iworo, the Chief of Kogga, the Osolo of Addo, the Csumba of Pokia, the Onisa of Igbesa, the King of Apa and others” (LWR, 26 June 1897, 5).

“the substitution of a national for tribal sentiment” and people would gradually “become politically members of one and the same nation and not merely one and the same race” (LWR, 26 June 1897, 4). The *Record* justified the British annexation of the Lagos interior region because people in the interior region needed the assistance of outsiders in order to achieve peace and civilisation:

The native<sup>284</sup> required external force to produce order. The ruder a people are, the less developed in the higher faculties, the more external force is necessary to keep individuals together and to teach discordant communities the advantage of harmony and co-operation. That this has been to a great extent effected by British rule in the interior of Yorubaland is one of the lessons which the Jubilee teaches (ibid).

As we have seen, the Jubilee ceremonies provided the educated elite with an optimistic view of their future,<sup>285</sup> and at the same time, the incentive to ponder possible unity of the society in the future. Nevertheless, while the Lagos newspapers emphasised unity of the society at the Jubilees ceremonies, these ceremonies also assisted maintenance of exclusivity of the educated elite. Voluntary associations relating to the Jubilees restricted its leading members to educated African elite and Europeans, and the reports of the ceremonies were only read by educated portion of society. The educated elite were conscious of their cultural privilege toward semi-educated or traditional elite due to their proximity to colonial authorities and civilisation. Although the Lagos press reported that the solidarity of society observed at the Governor’s Durbar, it also

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<sup>284</sup> The term “native” here was used in the meaning of indigenous non-elite Africans.

<sup>285</sup> This can be said on the Empire Day ceremonies as discussed later. Bloomfield (1990) pointed out about Empire Day movement in Britain that “One great influence of the Empire Movement was its promotion of a spirit of optimism. The participation in ceremony with colour, rhetoric and dance meant that the ideals of imperialism were experienced bodily and that its fundamental message was absorbed, remembered and often cherished into old age” (93).

illustrates educated elite's feeling of superiority toward Yoruba chiefs, most of whom were lacked Western education. The unity of people was described as things to be taught to the chiefs, and make them understand. This attitude can be seen in the Empire Day ceremonies discussed later.

What is more, despite the long, heated discussions on how the subscribed money would be used, it was three years later before actual work for constructing the Queen's Garden and refurbishment of the Glover Memorial Hall was carried out. There were some complaints about nothing having been done with the balance of the Diamond Jubilee Commemoration Fund, together with the £1083 subscribed by the Colonial Government—a total of £1700 (LS, 13 October 1897, 2; 8 June 1898, 3; 25 January 1899, 2),<sup>286</sup> but the Jubilee enthusiasm seems to have been rather temporary.

### **6.3. “Pacification” of Yorubaland and Usage of “Yoruba” in Lagos Newspapers**

This section examines the attitude of the Lagos press towards the British administration in the nineteenth century, especially to the British annexation of the Lagos hinterland in the 1890s. It also traces usage of the word “Yoruba” in the Lagos press and illustrates how Lagos newspapers normalised the word in pan-Yoruba meaning and popularised Yoruba consciousness. Awareness of being part of a powerful organisation like the British Empire made the educated elite ponder the possibility of solidarity in their own society. What the press defined as their “own society” seems to have changed from Lagos in 1887 to Yorubaland in 1897, as discussed in the previous

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<sup>286</sup> A member of the Lagos Women's Diamond Jubilee Society wrote to the editor of the *Lagos Standard*, under a pseudonym “A Woman”, about the usage of the Ladies Jubilee Memorial Fund (8 June 1898, 3). This Fund accumulated subscriptions from women of Lagos, and in 1906, presented a piano to the Town Hall, “in commemoration of H.M. Queen Victoria Diamond Jubilee” (LWR, 10 November 1906, 3).

section on Jubilees. This section interrupts the flow of the discussion relating to the celebrations of the British Empire, which continues from the previous section (6.2. on Queen Victoria's Jubilees) to the next section (6.4. on Empire Day celebrations). However, this section is situated here for chronological reason, as it explores the construction of pan-Yoruba identity, which is evident in the press from the late nineteenth century.

It would be useful to give a brief history of Yorubaland from the early nineteenth century to the completion of the British annexation of the Lagos hinterland in 1895, before going on to examine changes in usage of the word "Yoruba". The nineteenth century began with Oyo as a major power in the southwest of territory today called Nigeria, and as a main supplier of slaves to the coastal ports of Porto Novo and Lagos. The collapse of Oyo by the 1830s, in consequence of attacks from Hausa and Fulani Muslim revolutionaries, resulted in the establishment of new powers in the region, notably Ibadan, Ijaye and Abeokuta. This brought great instability to south-western Nigeria as large numbers of refugees migrated to all parts of the region and political authority was increasingly held by warlords. The longest and final phase of the Yoruba civil wars (1877-93) started when Egba and Ijebu opposed Ibadan predominance over other Yoruba ethnic groups. The initial pan-Yoruba interests and solidarity, to an extent, came from the opposition to Ibadan which came to be powerful after Oyo's decline (Peel 1989, 208; Akinjogbin 1998, 3). Before the nineteenth century, political, cultural and economic circumstances were such that it is hard to speak of one "Yoruba," though there were common traits in myths of origin, religion and other cultural aspects. Only during the nineteenth century, as will be discussed later in this section, "Yoruba" was invented as a cultural group with a uniform language. The large numbers of captives were sold down to European slave traders on the coast from the seventeenth century up

to the early nineteenth century. Many ended up as slaves in Brazil and Cuba. Others, intercepted at sea by the anti-slave trade squadron of the Royal Navy, were liberated thousands of miles away at the coastal colony of Sierra Leone. Some Yoruba ex-slaves in Brazil and Sierra Leone returned to resettle in their homeland, and used Yoruba culture and language to propagate the common identity, which was assisted by Christian missionaries and Islamic influences. It was out of necessity, that the idea of the “Yoruba” began to be reformulated.

Interior conflicts, that often disrupted trade routes between Lagos and its hinterland, affected Europeans and large numbers of people (educated and non-educated) engaged in commerce in Lagos, as well as the Lagos Colonial Government. Since the annexation of Lagos in 1861, the British home government had been reluctant to use its budget for the maintenance of the Lagos colony. Thus, the trade between Lagos and its hinterland was a main source of revenue for the Lagos Colonial Government. Lagos Colonial Government initially had been acting with great caution, avoiding intervention in interior conflicts. However, the fall in trade due to the consequent closure of trade routes changed the non-intervention policy of Lagos Colonial Government.<sup>287</sup> As a solution to the desperate economic condition and to intense Anglo-French rivalry in West Africa, the Colonial Government, in 1885, finally made up its mind to pacify the Lagos hinterland. In 1886, with the assistance of *Saro* clergymen such as Samuel Johnson and Charles Phillips, the Colonial Government ended the war between Ibadan and the alliance of Ekiti, Ijesa, Egba, Ijebu, and Ife

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<sup>287</sup> “From £734,707 in 1877, the value of exports fell to £577,336 in 1878, imports from £614,359 to £483,623, and revenue from £59,389 to £50,389. In 1879, there was some revival but in 1880, exports fell to £576,510, imports to £407,369, and revenue £47,987. After this, the depression continued until 1892, the worst year being 1881 and 1882. The 1881 figures were £460,007 for exports, £333,659 for imports and £42,421 for revenue” (Akintoye 1998, 281).

forces.<sup>288</sup> Even after that, Egba and Ijebu continued to resist the Lagos Colonial Government. Pressures from Lagos, Liverpool and Manchester Chamber of Commerce to work towards an end to the disturbance of trade, the growing French threat to British influence in West Africa, as well as the establishment of a French protectorate over Dahomey in 1890, contributed to the end of the non-military intervention policy of the Lagos Colonial Government. With the arrival of expansionist Governor Gilbert T. Carter, the Colonial Government initiated “pacification” by military force. The defeat of Ijebu in the Anglo-Ijebu War of 1892 forced other ethnic groups to accept treaties with the Colonial Government. After the Anglo-Ijebu War, there was no resistance, apart from that of Oyo which caused bombardment of the city in 1895 (Peel 2000, 27-46). Then the Yoruba countries came to be under the British colonial rule and became a part of the Lagos Colony and Protectorate (Omu 1978, 115-124; Isichei 1983, 214-221; Akintoye 1998; Falola and Heaton 2008, 95).<sup>289</sup>

The Lagos Colonial Government, European traders and educated elite had economic reason to support the British invasion of the Yoruba country. By the 1880s, a large number of people in Lagos were engaged in commerce and the Lagos educated elite were severely affected by interior conflicts that often disrupted trade routes between Lagos and its hinterland. Therefore, it was imperative for educated elite in Lagos to support the British invasion of the Yoruba country in order protect their own profits. In addition, throughout the nineteenth century, the Lagos educated elite whose places of origin differed, suffered from mutual suspicion among themselves. Many had family connections with Lagos hinterland which influenced their political attitudes.<sup>290</sup>

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<sup>288</sup> For detail on the Ekitiparapo War, see Akintoye (1998) and Arifalo (1998).

<sup>289</sup> Despite completion of Governor Carter’s direct intervention, the revenue of the Lagos colony did not improve and the Colonial Government began to introduce agriculture to compensate their budget (Gallagher et al. 1961, 188).

<sup>290</sup> For detail, Cole (1975, 59-71) and Echeruo (1977, 105).

Therefore, the annexation or “pacification” of Yorubaland by Governor Gilbert Carter in the 1890s was generally accepted as a laudable accomplishment by the educated elite in Lagos, apart from those with a strong affinity and affection towards their homeland, such as James Johnson and Otonba Payne of Ijebu Ode (Ayandele 1970; Cole 1975, 66-68; Omu 1978, 115-124).

The above-mentioned political conditions in Lagos and its hinterland had impacts on the meaning of the term “Yoruba” in Lagos newspapers. As will be ascertained, the 1880s and the 1890s were a critical period for change in usage of the term “Yoruba” as used in Lagos newspapers. The chart in Appendix 19 shows the usages of the term “Yoruba” during the 1880s. The bar charts compare the frequency of three types of “Yoruba” usages in the *Lagos Observer*, from the 3rd issue in March 1882 to the 155th issue in December 1888. The blue bar shows the prevalence of the term “Yoruba” used in the meaning of “Oyo” (Yoruba was originally a Hausa word to describe inhabitants of Oyo); the purple bar indicates how frequently the word was used with a “pan-Yoruba” definition, which includes several groups of people in Yorubaland, such as Ijebu, Egba, Ijesha, Ife, Oyo, etc. The yellow bar shows the number of times “Yoruba” appears as “Yoruba language”.

The most regularly used expression throughout the period was “Yoruba” referring to “Yoruba language”.<sup>291</sup> The chart shows that it regularly appeared throughout the 1880s. For instance, in 1882, the column “By The Way”, warned that the inclination for sending children abroad might result in losing Yorubanness:

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<sup>291</sup> The discussion of what constitutes “proper Yoruba” language is bound up with the mid-nineteenth missionary debates about the translation of the Bible. “Proper Yoruba” was, in fact, a synthetic language (largely composed of Egba vocabulary, structured by an Oyo grammar) which gradually spread through southwestern Nigeria, following the dissemination of CMS bibles and pamphlets. For detail, see Peel (2000, 283-88).

Gentlemen, cease sending your children to England for Education: merchants of all nationalities, keep your ledgers in **Yoruba**, else the sons of the soil will do nothing; principals, governesses, schoolmasters, let not a word of English or French be heard in your seminaries. Tailors, relinquish the European fashions, and adapt yourselves to *agbadas*. We are all determined to be Yoruba! (LO, 31 August 1882, 4)

In 1886, the editor advertised the recent published compilation of “Native poems” by Aribiloso, a satirical poet of Abeokuta (discussed in Chapter 4): “The pamphlet is full of fun and is sold at only 7d. It will repay perusal and all who can read **Yoruba**, should encourage the youthful author in this his contribution to the Literature of the Yoruba language” (LO, 18 September & 2 October 1886, 4).

The term “Yoruba” appeared regularly throughout the 1880s, but this term in the meaning of “Yoruba language” increased significantly in 1882. This was due to the promulgation of a regulatory Education Ordinance by the Colonial Government. Whilst teaching of English was compulsory, the lack of a vernacular language in the curriculum provoked strong opposition within Lagos society. Heated debates on language education evoked cultural nationalism (Cole 1975, 51-52; Echeruo 1977, 55-56; Omu 1978, 107).

In the early 1880s, “Yoruba” was occasionally used in the meaning of “Oyo”, especially in the context of conflicts among ethnic groups in the Lagos hinterland. The editorial of the *Lagos Observer* on 2 March 1882 reports that it came to the conclusion that regarding the conflicts between people in Ibadan and Egba: “the Ibadans are much to be credited with being the originators of the political chaos, which have plunged all the other tribes (including the **Yoruba**-proper) into misery”. In the column “By The Way” of 1883, prejudices among peoples were described in relation to the court jury system:



Tribal feeling and prejudices, and opposing interests should not influence their minds more than the sacred obligation of an oath. The object of the jury system is to ensure justice, but if an Egba insists on acquitting an Egba, (although he knows the latter is guilty), a **Yoruba** ditto, Portuguese ditto, and Ijebu ditto, what security do they give for justice? (LO, 22 November 1883, 3)

Another Lagos newspaper, the *Eagle*, also concerned the social cleavage in Lagos society and commented in 1883:

The population of Lagos is composed of the following nationalities, namely, **Yoruba**, *Egba*, *Ijebu*, *Popo*, *Portuguese*, *Spanish*, *Houssa*, *Tapa Iboe*, *Benin*, and a sprinkling of not a few others; all possessing strong predilections for their native tongues manners and customs and equally gifted by nature with their respective native pride, and if the whole were thrown into the sieve, we guess very few pure **Yorubas** will fall through. It might be advanced that in the term **Yoruba**, is comprehended the whole of the various tribes, speaking the generic language and not any distinct dialect of it but we say, such is the present state of things that the very term is a source of offence to the whole of the remaining other tribes; therefore for an agreement the name of the literature has to be changed (E&LC, 31 March 1883, 2-3).

In addition, describing the lack of unity in Lagos society in 1884:

Jewish **Yoruba** would have no dealings with the Samaritan Egba, the Roman Ijeṣa would have nothing to do with the barbarian Ijebu, & c., &c. And yet all these tribes and a dozen more are fellow-citizens in the same Island under the same Government, and we venture to say, under the influence of the same God. The want of unity is too patent in this community (E&LC, 26 April 1884, 2).

As the chart indicates, the word “Yoruba” in the sense of “Oyo” almost disappeared after issue 71 on October 1884, apart from being used once in an issue on 26 May 1888, which referred to the origin of J. P. Haastrup. A letter by “Osun” accused Haastrup of

providing false information on his origin as a member of the Ijesha royal family.<sup>292</sup>

The chart in Appendix 19 also shows that the term “Yoruba” was used in the sense of pan-Yoruba most frequently in the 128<sup>th</sup> issue of the *Lagos Observer* on Queen Victoria’s Golden Jubilee. This is due to the fact that the *Observer* quoted all addresses and speeches of the Governor who emphasised the importance of terminating conflicts among ethnic groups and promoting unity in Yoruba countries. For instance, in his response to the address by the “Representatives in Lagos of Yoruba Land”, Governor Moloney used the term “Yoruba” as one area, where it should be “a united land”:

Gentlemen,

In its representative character I receive with interest and sincere pleasure, your loyal address. I recognise in it a reflection of **Yoruba** gratitude, a quality, rare in genniness [sic], to be admired in any nation, and one the existence of which should be appreciated and carefully watched over.

On this eventful and auspicious occasion you naturally desire to give public expression of your loyalty to your Queen, and of your thankfulness for what has been done, with the gracious consent of your Sovereign, for your fellow countrymen in **Yoruba**. As you are fully aware, after 10 years of intertribal war, inactive and passive stages, which blocked the way there against any development, social or commercial. The intervention alone of this Government succeeded in removing such block, an intervention, I may remind you, not put upon, but solicited by the Peoples of **Yoruba** directly concerned, although somewhat opposed I regret to have to say by their very fellow countrymen in this Capital (LO, 2 & 9 July 1887, 7).

However, what should be added again is that, at this point of 1887, Yoruba unity was something to be aimed for and had not yet been realised, and it was not until the mid-

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<sup>292</sup> According to “Osun”, Haastrup commented in 1882 that his “mother was a princess of Ijesha-land; the present king is my uncle; my father was a prince of Ijebu” and in 1887: “No one has more interests in the Ijesha-land than myself, being of their blood and the Ijebu, and seeing I am not of the **Yoruba** origin and the present reigning king is my uncle” (LO, 26 May 1888, 4).

1890s that “Yoruba” as the pan-Yoruba meaning (as one nation) became much more normally used in the Lagos press. As has been discussed in the previous section on the Jubilee celebrations, it seems as if experiencing the celebrations of the British Empire, and reading the descriptions in Lagos newspapers that emphasised the solidarity of Lagos society—as a member of a big organisation called the British Empire—and the need for unity in the Yoruba country, made the educated elite become aware of the possibility of a consolidated Yoruba nation.

In the 1890s the word “Yorubaland” frequently appeared in the Lagos press in relation to the British expansion into the Lagos hinterland. The Lagos newspapers encouraged British intervention and repeated the phrase: “consolidation of Yoruba” and “the welfare of all is the welfare of each”. Instead of highlighting the economic benefits of pacifying conflicts among interior ethnic groups, the Lagos press attempted to encourage the “consolidation of Yorubaland” by using modernisation theory, a rhetoric of racial advancement and social progress. As early as 1883, a correspondent called “T” wrote a letter to highlight the necessity for the indigenous people in the Lagos hinterland “to sink all tribal, party, or political differences, and as they speak one tongue, unite to become one nation”, which had, according to him, already been achieved by indigenous people in Sierra Leone. He also pointed out that only when this was done would Yoruba speaking people wield power in their land and “a Negro [could] raise himself” (LT, 24 October 1883, 2). The Lagos press repeatedly praised British influence for encouraging the development of “peace and the social, moral and material progress” in Yoruba country.<sup>293</sup> Although proto-nationalists resisted growing racialism from the

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<sup>293</sup> For instance, see (LWR, 16 June 1894, 2; 26 October 1895, 4; 27 March 1897, 4; 24 September 1898, 4). A typical article on British intervention can be found in the *Record* in 1897. It jubilantly reported that Acting Governor Denton had succeeded in negotiations with native chiefs in the Lagos hinterland and removed the military force stationed at Oyo: “We take this step as marking a new epoch in the history of Yorubaland. **The Yorubas are naturally a**

late nineteenth century and resented to some of the policies of the British Colonial Government, the Lagos press did not doubt the justification of colonisation by Britain itself. It seems the necessity to terminate conflicts in Yorubaland and British policies of intervention influenced the changing perception of “Yoruba”, at least for the educated elite in Lagos, and the Lagos press increasingly described the “Yoruba” as one people.

Consequently, “Yoruba” meaning pan-Yoruba appeared in the articles on culture. The editorial titled “The Literature of the Country” placed importance on acquiring the English language, which had already become a universal language, “the vehicle of thought for about a third of the human race”, while at the same time emphasising the importance of the Yoruba language:

“Yorubaland has no literature. Her history and traditions, her wars and troubles, her songs and folklore, her parables, proverbs, axioms, apothegms are collected to this day from the mental storage of elders and dames of sires and grandsires.” This misfortune exists also with most West African people. It was this fact and the abundant indications of it which led one of the uncharitable sons of a literature-teeming land to suppose, “Africa has no past”... [However,] “Africa has no past” does not necessarily mean “**Yoruba** has no past”. A strong and continuous

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**peace-loving people** and more inclined to industrial pursuits than warlike occupations, and there can be no doubt that under the beneficent and subduing influence of British rule this natural disposition of the people will assert itself and the presence of a military force in the country will become unnecessary and inexpedient... Millions of people spread over a vast extent of fertile country, speaking the same language or at least understanding each other, have dissipated their national life in a multitude of little municipalities, with rulers that do not rule, each trying to establish a separate influence of itself, impatient of subjection, constantly fighting for precedence and ascendancy and raising insurmountable obstacles in the way of their own progress. It should be considered an inestimable blessing that a great foreign power has now come in to aid them to settle their differences, to allay their jealousies, and pointing out at least the possibility of consolidating the scattered elements of what might be a great nation and establishing a central authority under whose guidance they might be trained to study and learn the lesson that **the welfare of all is the welfare of each**... Of course time will be required for the **consolidation of the Yoruba** country. But the policy and agencies in operation are tending in that direction. British rule in Yorubaland is practically enlarging the borders of the world’s **civilization**. The long sealed Yoruba Kingdoms are being thrown open. And the Yoruba peoples long estranged by childish quarrels and hoary superstitions are being reunited under the auspices and through the beneficent influence of British rule” (LWR, 27 March 1897, 4).

effort at producing a **Yoruba** Literature of every kind and grade so far as circumstances allow will serve in the hands of sincere christian [sic] men as one safeguard against the encroachment of Islam... English may be spoken from Verde to Guardafui, from Mediterranean to the Cape but **Yoruba** will be the language of the home of Yorubaland (LS, 22 January 1896, 3).

The quotation below shows that “Yoruba” came to be accepted as the term for describing a “nation” that covered Yorubaland in the mid-1890s. In a letter from “Nomen” on the current custom of changing Christian surnames to Yoruba ones, the Yoruba were described as one “nation”:

Every nation has its system of names... The most ancient and simplest is that of the ancient Hebrews which is adopted by most of the Orientals, where names are given to each individual according to some circumstance connected with its birth, family or nation. The **Yorubas** seem to have derived their own from the Orientals, but it has lost its simplicity, and is now full of incongruities, a consequence of foreign influences acting upon the nation (LS, 25 March 1896, 3).

In the early twentieth century, the idea of the “Yoruba as one tribe (nation)” was described as a “natural” notion. In 1905, a year before the amalgamation of Lagos Colony and the Southern Nigeria Protectorate, the “oneness of the Yoruba” was taken up in the editorial and by correspondents of the *Record* as the main reason for the opposition to the amalgamation. The editorial in 1905 commented:

The **oneness of the Yoruba** family of people is admitted and rests upon the solid foundation of sanguineous affiliation and identity of language—an affinity which surely might be taken into consideration in any arrangement for purposes of political administration of the country... It is well known that the site of the original Oyo town was some distance beyond Ilorin, in which the Yoruba language is spoken by the Jekris [Itsekiris], and all the various people inhabiting

the districts between Lagos and Benin, the traditions of which latter country all point to Ife as the origin and ancestral home of its people. This being so, and as happily the whole country is in the British sphere of influence the reason does not appear why the tribal affinity of the **Yoruba** people should be interfered with or interrupted for the purposes of government. If there is any serious intention to promote the interests and welfare of the people, such intention would be better denoted by the grouping of the tribes on **natural and rational** lines than by some whimsical arrangement which only rests on official fancy (28 October 1905, 4).

A letter from a reader also in opposition to the amalgamation of the Lagos colony and the Southern Nigerian Protectorate emphasised that it would destroy natural unity of the Yoruba:

How the Yoruba Country was formerly **one entity** under one Supreme Head in those peaceful days of our Fathers, before the foreign Slave trade in the South, and Koran-Spreading Filanis in the north Jomented [sic: Fomented] Strifes among them, and intertribal wars devastated the country, is now well-known to all. It is but **natural** that a people speaking one language, worshipping the same gods, all claiming one origin, identical in sympathies and affinities should be under one government; so it was once, and so we hoped it would be again (LWR, 4 November 1905, 6).<sup>294</sup>

In addition, from the early twentieth century, the word “Yoruba” came to appear

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<sup>294</sup> The letter continues as follows: “Now, if the British Government must enforce the *pax Britanica*, it is but fair to expect that they restore to the Yoruba Country those portions that have been stolen from it by wars. The **Yoruba** Country comprises all the tribes within the great bend of the Niger, from Jebba to Brass along the right bank, with the exception of Lokoja which is a modern town built by a British Consul. But now Ilorin and the site of ancient Oyo in the North, also Otun, Yagbas fathers till recently under Ibadan, are now assigned to Northern Nigeria, being linked with Tapas and Housas, whilst Onitsha Benin, Brass the Jekris all of whom named strong affinities with **Yoruba**, by... language and origin, are linked with the Effiks of Calabar and other alien tribes of Southern Nigeria. This cannot but be a jource [sic: source] of permanent grievance to all... For syndicates and empire builders thousands of miles away, sitting at [a] round table with a map spread before them, to be alienating whole tribes from their natural ties and affinities arbitrarily breaking some away from their ancient allegiance, disposing of the destinies of nations as best suits their dividends, but against the protests of the sufferers, seems to have in it the same underlying principle as slavery on a huge scale... And now we hear of amalgamation! wherein lies the benefit? Not to [the] governed certainly” (LWR, 4 November 1905, 6).

more frequently in the context of culture and language rather than in a political context in Lagos newspapers because a territorial framework for Yorubaland was already achieved.<sup>295</sup> The fact that from 1905, columns devoting space specifically to Yoruba history and culture, which were often serialised, appeared in all Lagos newspapers, shows that the concept of “pan-Yoruba” identity, i.e. Yoruba people as sharing a common culture and history, had been disseminated at least among the educated elite in Lagos.<sup>296</sup> Although the influence of growing cultural nationalism cannot be disregarded, it seems that Lagos newspaper articles on the pacification of Yorubaland by the Colonial Government between 1886 and 1895 normalised the term “Yoruba” in the pan-Yoruba sense. Consequently the Yoruba in pan-Yoruba meaning came to appear more frequently in the context of culture and language from the early twentieth century. In addition, the British Empire celebrations, which encouraged solidarity of the empire, also gave an ideological framework for the “consolidated Yoruba” as a nation.

What must also be noted is that the Yoruba were described as one of the colonies under British rule, and, regarding its literature (and sometimes history), it was described as equally important as literature in European countries. As early as 1882, a letter from “Veritas”<sup>297</sup> to the *Lagos Observer* showed that the educated elite also recognised themselves to be equals to their counterparts elsewhere, especially in the fields of

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<sup>295</sup> This is partly due to the arrival of cultural-oriented newspaper, the *Nigerian Chronicle* in 1908.

<sup>296</sup> As mentioned in Chapter 2, from 1905, serialised articles entitled “A General History of the Yoruba Country”, that covered subjects on history and social conditions of people in Yorubaland, were published in the *Lagos Standard* under the pseudonym “A Yoruba Historian” (LS, 7 June 1905- 7 March 1906). In addition, the establishment of the *Nigerian Chronicle* in 1908 increased the number of columns on Yoruba history and culture like “Yoruba Antiquity”, “Burial Customs in the Yoruba Country”, “Mythology and Religion (Ifa) in Yoruba”, and “Yoruba Names”.

<sup>297</sup> The letter was a response to one suggestion, which appeared in a previous issue of the *Lagos Observer*, that the Arabic alphabet should be adapted instead of the English Alphabet in order to represent the sound of the Yoruba language. “Veritas” strongly supported the idea as it would induce people further afield—people in Sierra Leone, on the banks of the Niger, in Lagos hinterland as well as all Muslims—to learn the Yoruba language.

literature and culture. The letter pointed out an evil in society, namely the “habit of disregarding and ignoring, and in some cases, totally crying down our Native Language”. If people persisted in disgracing their own language, it only meant that “all the legends connected with our race, and some of the most brilliant exploits of our ancestors as handed to us by tradition, must forever be consigned to oblivion”, and the country could not rise without their own literature. The author of this text placed the legend of Ile Ife side by side with the legend of Troy; and some Yoruba leaders side by side with Greek and Roman philosophers:

The legends of Troy, it must be admitted, for interest, stand pre-eminent; but what can equal for beauty and poetical embellishments the legends of Ile Ife—that cradle of mankind, as tradition relates. Their oratorical powers have immortalized the names of Demosthenes and Cicero; but their orations in many points can hardly be said to excel those that have been delivered in the house of Ogboni at Abeokuta, or those in the palace of the Alafin of Oyo, or those that have moved the soldiery to deeds of daring bravery in the camp of the field-marshal Ogedemgbe of Ileṣa? If the world had got only the English translation of the Iliad, and the Greek of the Paradise Lost, or if the English Edition of the Divine Comedy were all that is available, what little lustre would these have shed on the genius of Homer, of Milton and of Dante! It is in their native languages that they have severally gained an immortal wreath for themselves in the world of literature (LO, 1 June 1882, 3).<sup>298</sup>

At the beginning of the editorial of the *Eagle* on 28 July 1883 on lack of unity in the Lagos society, Yoruba (Oyo) was placed side by side with European nations: “In a

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<sup>298</sup> The letter ends with the following verse:  
“Before all tongues in East or West  
I love my native tongue the best,  
Though not so smoothly spoken,  
Nor woven with Italian art,  
Yet when it speaks from heart to heart,  
The word is never broken” (LO, 1 June 1882, 3).



young and rapidly rising country, be it English, French, German, **Yoruba**, Egba, Ijesha, it must be admitted, that this subject should be second to none in importance and interest”.

Here, I would like to give an overview of discussions on the construction of Yorubanness, and my own contribution towards this academic subject. The formation of Yoruba ethnic identity is interpreted as a late nineteenth and early twentieth century phenomenon. The process of the construction of “Yorubanness” during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries has been discussed by several scholars. Four factors, which have already been discussed, contributed to the historical process of the “invention” of Yoruba.

The first was the influence of Christianity, namely, the role of the CMS and its *Saro* and European clergies in the articulation and dissemination of a sense of pan-Yoruba national identity. The Yoruba identity developed originally among the diaspora of displaced ex-slaves in Sierra Leone, called *Saro*; and was fed back into the Yoruba homeland by the “repatriates” who returned to resettle there. J. D. Y. Peel’s monumental work, *Religious Encounter and the Making of the Yoruba* (2000), made great use of the diaries of Yoruba evangelists and subsequently demonstrated how their engagement with Christianity led to the creation of a distinct Yoruba identity. Missionaries designated the dialect of the Oyo Kingdom as the “Standard Yoruba” language in the 1850s, and the Yoruba gradually came to be known themselves as an ethnic community distinct from other Nigerian linguistic groups. Peel saw Christian conversion, not as the imposition of a hegemonic European worldview of indigenous people, but rather as a key ingredient in the construction of Yoruba identity. In the process of the conversion, Christianity was naturalised within Yorubaland, through its

translation into indigenous conceptual categories.<sup>299</sup>

In his earlier work, “The Cultural Work of Yoruba Ethnogenesis” (1989), Peel discussed that pan-Yoruba identity was constructed through “an active reflection on the past” especially through historical writings that were often written by Christian Yoruba educated elite, the majority of whom consisted of *Saro* (199). The 1920s was the critical period for the formation of Yoruba identity, “as migration, cash-cropping, education and conversion” to Christianity drew more people from sub-ethnic groups into wider social circles (200). Peel stressed the importance of historical studies in forming the identity of Yoruba. The publication of Samuel Johnson’s *The History of Yorubas from the Earliest Times to the Beginning of the British Protectorate*, which was completed in 1897 but first published in 1921, inspired studies on other Yoruba sub-groups, like Egba and Ijebu. A main object of Johnson’s work was “to present the wider Yoruba identity promoted by the missions” (Peel 1989, 206). Paradoxically, it also promoted alternative histories of Yoruba, which would oppose Johnson’s argument of Oyo/Ibadan as the origin of Yoruba people. The anti-Oyo versions of Yoruba history placed other groups in direct relation with Ife, the cradle of Yoruba. The emergence of several Yoruba vernacular newspapers in the 1920s also accelerated the identity formation of the Yoruba. Yoruba consciousness was first constructed following cultural nationalism amongst educated Yoruba Christians—through their research on Yoruba language, religion, customs, and history—and this consciousness later turned into political nationalism.

Another factor is the influence of trans-Atlantic relationships with the New World,

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<sup>299</sup> Rev. Samuel Johnson argued in *History of the Yorubas* (1921) that the rulers of Oyo were actually descended from Old Testament figures and that the Yoruba religion had once been monotheistic. Conversion to Christianity, therefore, represented a “return” to ancient Yoruba ideals, which had been corrupted by “heathenism”, political fragmentation, and the slave trade (Peel 2000).

especially those of Brazilians returning to Lagos. While Peel (2000) emphasised the Christian *Saro*'s contribution to the construction of Yoruba-ness, others, such as Robin Law (1997; 2004) and James L. Matory (1999; 2005) focused on the role of Brazilian "repatriates" in West Africa or enslaved Yorubas in Brazil in the making of the Yoruba in the nineteenth century. During the Yoruba "civil wars" (i.e., wars between polities/peoples later constructed as sharing a common Yoruba identity) in the nineteenth century, a large number of people from Yorubaland were enslaved during the transatlantic slave trade and taken to the New World, particularly to Cuba and Brazil.<sup>300</sup> The new ethnic identity constituted in the diaspora was brought into the homeland through the repatriation of ex-slaves to Africa (Law 1997, 205)

James Lorand Matory's *Black Atlantic Religion* (2005) is an historical and ethnographical analysis of Candomblé, an Afro-Brazilian religion with Yoruba orisha veneration. He placed the study of Candomblé in a transnational framework, arguing that pan-Yoruba consciousness was constructed through the trans-Atlantic movement of people, commodities and ideas, especially between Nigeria and Brazil. This research serves as a contribution to the Brazilian-oriented aspects of debates on the construction of the "Yoruba". The continuing links of the Brazilian Yorubas with Lagos, and their ongoing relations with other groups when they returned to, or visited the city, influenced "Yorubanness" in Lagos as well as in Brazil. Matory argued that a pan-Yoruba consciousness was made possible by the experiences of the Yoruba slaves in the New World, especially Brazil, where localised town affiliations were subsumed into a larger common identity. He highlighted the importance of individuals—clergy, merchants and academics—in bringing Lagosian cultural nationalist ideology, namely, the defense of

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<sup>300</sup> The descendants of those who were forced to settle in Cuba and northern Brazil still held a dialect of Yoruba called Nago (Law 1997).

the “purity” of Yoruba, to Brazil in the 1890s. Yoruba culture, religion and language was exported to Brazil where it became popular in the 1920s and 1930s and has remained so. Following research on trans-Atlantic connections, the criteria that Bishop Charles Phillips, in 1890, used to define “Yorubanness”, namely, “(1) having a common language, (2) holding the tradition of common origin, regarding Ile-Ife as the cradle of the race” (Peel 2000, 286), were inserted into New World discourses.

The third is the influence of Islam on Yoruba religion and culture. Exactly when Islam entered the territory called Nigeria today is still contentious.<sup>301</sup> In the seventeenth century, Islam was introduced to Yorubaland, and by the 1810s there were substantial numbers of Muslims in Nigeria (Law 1984, 208; Peel 2000, 191). Though his main focus is Christianity, Peel (2000) explored the integration of three religions: Christianity, Islam and the “traditional” religion, arguing that the Yoruba religion was constructed by integrating several aspects of the Islamic religion. Ifa divination was strongly influenced by Islam, in both its form and procedures. Yoruba Christian missionaries adopted Arabic terms in religious expression, such as *alufa* for Muslim cleric and Christian priest, *woli* for saint, *adura* for prayer, and *keferi* for heathen, which all came from the Arabic language, so that they could attract “pagan” indigenous people who had been having long contact with Islam (187-214).

In *Self-assertion and Brokerage: Early Cultural Nationalism in West Africa* (1990), Farias considered the impact of Islam on cultural nationalism in Nigeria, examining “Muslim retellings of Yoruba origins” as articulated by the Arokin<sup>302</sup> of Oyo and by the writer and scholar Al-Hājj Ādam al-Ilūrī. The oral traditions of Arokin with

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<sup>301</sup> “Some scholars identify Berbers from North Africa as the main group to introduce Islam into Borno, around the 11<sup>th</sup> century. Others disagree, saying it did not come through Borno, but arrived via Mali to Kano, west of Borno” (Falola and Genova 2009, 173-174).

<sup>302</sup> The Arokin “are a hereditary corporation of male musicians who are praise singers and oral traditionalists to the Alaafin”, King of New Oyo (Farias 1990, 112).

the Yoruba religion contained Muslim elements, such as a theme of “a pre-Islamic Arab diviner (*kāhin*) called Saṭīh b. Rabīca”, and allusion to “the story of Muhammad’s miraculous escape” (124-25). In *Asl Qabail Yuruba* (The origin of the Yoruba Tribes), published in 1977, Al-Hājj Ādam al-Ilūrī mentioned five points relating to Yoruba culture with Arabic origins. That is, “the distinction between crowned kings and uncrowned rulers,” “respect for elders”, “inheritance rules”, an analogy of a Muslim praise poem and Yoruba praise singing, and the fact that fifty percent Yoruba words were of Arabic origin (Farias 1990, 142).<sup>303</sup> The Yoruba origin was a central theme of early cultural nationalists; it was the theme of Samuel Johnson’s *History of Yorubas*, and Al-Hājj Ādam al-Ilūrī’s work corresponds with elements of Johnson’s work, such as Oyo superiority over other ethnic groups. Both the Arokin and the Al-Hājj Ādam al-Ilūrī cases show that they anchored the Yoruba identity to language, and Muslim identity has been compatible with and contributed to Yoruba self-assertion.

Fourth, Olatunji Ojo (2009) emphasises non-diasporatic factors in the shaping of Yoruba ethnicity. While other studies examine the role of repatriates from Sierra Leone and Brazil, Ojo focuses on the local environment—nineteenth century Yoruba religions and Yoruba warfare—as the central to the birth of Yoruba ethnic consciousness. Four elements in nineteenth century Yoruba region particularly assisted Yoruba identity formation. The first is the “unified” Yoruba Orisa religion in the homeland—an antecedent of Yoruba diaspora religion, such as Santeria in Cuba, Camdomblé in Brazil,

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<sup>303</sup> Moreover, in a trans-Atlantic context, Lovejoy (2004) focuses on Yoruba people in the Americas who have identified themselves as Lucumí and Nagô since the sixteenth century. Paul Lovejoy examines how the shared language contributed to the making of a common Yoruba ethnicity. “Lovejoy regards religion and especially Islam as central to contributing to a collective identity both in West Africa and the Americas because the term Yoruba has Muslim origins and was later adopted by Christians...Lovejoy demonstrates the direct relationship between political instability in Africa often caused by the jihad and the destinations of the Yoruba in the New World” (Falola and Childs 2004, 7).

Sango or Orisa in Trinidad, and Egungun in Sierra Leone—that linked ethnic factionalisation with slaving operation. The second is interethnic marriage between ex-slaves. The third are the historical narratives (*itan*) on a common origin of Yoruba, Ile-Ife, that preceded the diasporic pan-Yoruba consciousness. The fourth are anti-Oyo/Ibadan ethnic associations, such as the Ijesha Association and the Ekitiparapo Society, which “served to promote feelings of homogeneity” (71).

The above-mentioned four factors, interacting within the political and economic conditions of Lagos, helped to mold the modern consciousness of the Yoruba.<sup>304</sup> My research emphasises the importance of the British colonial system for the formation of the Yoruba identity, stressing the contribution of newspapers in disseminating “pan-Yoruba” consciousness. It shows that pan-Yoruba consciousness overwhelmed the term “Yoruba” in the sense of “Oyo” during the years of British intervention in the 1880s-1890s. This seems to suggest that a long tradition of cultural and language affinities among Yoruba ethnic groups turned into reality in the 1890s by the British pacification of Yorubaland. Lagos newspaper articles on the annexation of Yorubaland between 1886 and 1895 normalised the term “Yoruba” in the pan-Yoruba sense. Consequently, “Yoruba” in a pan-Yoruba meaning came to appear more frequently in the context of culture and language from the early twentieth century. The “Yoruba” nation was increasingly described as one of the regions under British rule, although it was also occasionally described as having equally important literature and culture as those in European countries. It has been argued that people who called themselves Yoruba today didn’t recognise themselves as such until the 1920s, and that it was

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<sup>304</sup> While the “Yoruba” may appear today as a unified political community, internally, Yorubanness remains a framework within which smaller collective identities such as Ijesa, Ibadan or Oyo compete for resources and influence (Lentz 1995, 322). Pan-Yoruba identity thus coexists with sub-ethnic identity.

through a “cultural work” (“an active reflection of the past”) that the Yoruba came to “know themselves” as a distinct people (Peel 1989). Before one form of a “cultural work”, historical writings became widely available from the 1920s, Lagos newspapers – often preserved by readers for long time—played a significant role in normalising the term “Yoruba” in a pan-Yoruba meaning.<sup>305</sup> Moreover, as discussed in a previous section of this chapter, the gathering of various peoples at events and associations related the British Empire and newspaper descriptions that reported people’s unity at British Empire related events, made some contributions to the construction of the Yoruba identity. Therefore, the Lagos press seems to have projected a sense of local unity within the British Empire, and utilised this ideological framework in order to encourage the consolidation of the Yoruba nation.

In addition, as far as my examination of Lagos newspapers between 1880 and 1920 shows, the term “Yoruba” people indicated indigenous non-elite people in the Lagos hinterland or up to the early 1880s, occasionally referred to as inhabitants of Oyo, separated from any symbols of civilization such as Christianity and education. This would be due to the fact that Christianity was almost exclusively for the semi-educated and educated section of society, although there were growing numbers of indigenous non-elite adherents of Christianity and Independent African Churches that accepted some Yoruba customs were established in the late nineteenth century. Muslims were also described as a separate group from either the Christian educated elite or “pagan” (Yoruba) indigenous people.<sup>306</sup> There was a large number of Yoruba whose religious

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<sup>305</sup> For instance, John Otonba Payne’s family preserved nineteenth century newspapers up to the 1960s (Kopytoff 1965, 304).

<sup>306</sup> In a rare case, Muslim educated elite contributed to Lagos Newspaper, published by Christian educated elite. As I have mentioned in Chapter 2, the *Lagos Standard* started, in 1913, a serialised column, “Facts and Figures” that took form of a letter by a Muslim called “Babuji”, who lived on 38 Ondo Street, Ago Egba, Ebute Metta.

denomination was Islam, but it seems the Lagos press rarely combined the term Muslim and Yoruba. Yoruba people were represented almost exclusively as “pagan” with indigenous religion and cultures. What is more, the educated elite in Lagos did not consider themselves same as indigenous people in Yorubaland, although they shared the same language and some of the customs and cultures. For the educated elite with a sense of mission and superiority as elite, Yoruba language and culture were what educated people had to protect and preserve for the mass.

#### **6.4. Making Imperial Citizens: Empire Day Celebration in Nigeria 1905 onward**

From the two Jubilees of Queen Victoria in 1887 and 1897 until the accession and coronation of Elizabeth II in 1953, all royal occasions—coronations, funerals, weddings and jubilees—became imperial events. Among all the loyal and imperial events, the most constantly celebrated throughout the British Empire was Queen Victoria’s Birthday. This section places emphasis on newspaper descriptions of Empire Day celebrations in southern Nigeria. The death of Queen Victoria in 1901 brought to an end the optimistic era of “Victorian Lagos”. However, she kept living in people’s memories as one of the great monarchs who brought glorious progress and expansion of the British Empire. In this part, the continuation and changes in descriptions of Empire Day in Nigeria will be explored.

The idea of Empire Day was devised and instigated by Reginald Brabazon, the seventh Earl of Meath, in order to remind children of the glorious achievement of the British Empire and to accordingly “nurture a sense of collective identity and imperial responsibility among young empire citizens” through patriotic festivals for schools. Empire Day was celebrated for some forty years in the British Empire (Bloomfield 1990,



74; English 2006, 248). It was first celebrated on 24 May 1904 in British colonies, including Gambia, Sierra Leone and the Gold Coast. Nigeria started the celebration the following year (LWR, 4 June 1904, 3). This was officially called “Victoria Day” in tropical countries like Nigeria. Empire Day, initially, was celebrated only with a fanfare for school-children. The usual programme of the day included: children’s demonstration, band music and the Governor’s speech; followed by the British National Anthem, feasting for children and a sports competition. It was reported that what most attracted the children was the feasting. The *Nigerian Chronicle* even complained about the reduction of the capitation fee from 6s to 4s per schoolchild, and hoped that the Colonial Government would “give the children their full allowance next year as no subject of His Majesty is more loyal”<sup>307</sup> (30 May 1913, 2). This extract shows that the guardianship and allowance given by the Government was taken for granted. The attitude of expecting supports from the authority such as material improvements in the colony, while criticising some policies of the Colonial Government, frequently appear in the Lagos press.

The celebration of Empire Day soon spilled out from being just a children’s celebration and came to include various adult events. Outlining the proposals, the *Standard* proclaimed, “we would like to see on this anniversary more of a demonstration on the part of the adult population; lectures and addresses delivered on the life of the late Queen, the growth of the Empire during her reign and its extent and resources at the present day” (22 May 1907, 4-5). In response to this assertion, an event was organised, not by the Colonial Government, but by the “native” educated elite. A Grand Ball was held by Herbert Macaulay at Glover Memorial Hall, with 140

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<sup>307</sup> The reduction of the fee was rumoured to be due to one local clergy who appropriated the provision for his own use. This article shows that the guardianship and allowance given by the Government was taken for granted (NC, 30 May 1913, 2).

participants (LS, 5 June 1907, 4).

In 1909 the *Record* reported the increasing importance of Empire Day: “Empire Day is rapidly acquiring a practical significance of deep meaning and purpose which goes beyond that inspired by the hallowed memory of the revered departed which the day first stood for and commemorates”. The main feature of Empire Day 1909 was the Children’s Demonstration, which comprised 6,000-8,000 school children, all marching from Tinubu Square to the Race Course with the music of several bands. In His Excellency, the Acting Governor’s speech at the Race Course, he admonished pupils “to develop their physical powers in order that they might grow manly and capable of joining in the defence of the Empire”, and emphasised that “there should be greater unity between the Native and the European as was the case in the past and all should seek to reconcile divergences [sic] of opinion rather than to accentuate them”. After the Governor’s speech it was reported that “the vast concourse of children united in singing, the National Anthem, being led by the band” (29 May 1909, 3).

A characteristic of newspaper descriptions of Empire Day is that they put emphasis on students of various denominations standing in one line, which symbolised the union of the citizen in Lagos.<sup>308</sup> In the *Standard*, Empire Day was reported as a fanfare for school children, with emphasis on students standing in one line:

the children participating in the Empire Day celebrations mustered strong at Tinubu Square under their respective tutors, and were carefully arranged in an orderly manner **into one long line**. The most striking feature in the arrangement was that Christians and Mohammadens, pagans and heathens were all summoned to meet together on one common level, irrespective of creeds or dogmas... After

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<sup>308</sup> In 1907, it was reported: “The [Empire] day in Lagos... has always been looked upon more as ‘Children’s Day’. On that day, the schoolchildren of the various denominational schools in town, the Government Moslem school, and the Koranic piazza schools assemble at Tinubu Square, and march thence to the Race Course” (LS, 22 May 1907, 4).

singing of the National Anthem... His Excellency left the Grand Stand for the usual round of inspection. His progress through the lines of children was marked by the demonstrations of extreme loyalty at every step, and must have made His Excellency feel that the children of Southern Nigeria are not behind in their devotion to the British Crown and loyalty to the King's representative (28 May 1913, 4).

The *Standard* reported rejoicing of Empire Day in 1918 as follows: "The day was fine, a bright sun shining the whole day and one inspected the sea of young faces stretched line after line in countless numbers of lines far away from the Grand Stand; one was filled with thoughts of the future possibilities of our race" (29 May 1918, 4).

As Bloomfield (1990) suggests, "physical action or embodiment is a powerful means of expressing ideological belief", and this method "was used effectively in the creation of an imperial mentality through the symbolic and ritualistic use of dances and drills performed as a public spectacle by children" in the Empire Day celebration in Britain (74). These descriptions in the Lagos press of children marching in one line and singing together would work as an enforcement of feeling as a British subject. In Britain, the events of Empire Day "were disciplined, organised and stylish, in large measure because drill had become compulsory in elementary schools in 1895". It was believed to serve a number of useful purposes: the promotion of fitness, the development of correct posture and, in time, ritualistic training for imperial celebrations (ibid, 9). In Lagos as has been discussed, the importance of drill was only mentioned in the Governor's speech. It seems that the performance of drill did not particularly attract the attention of the Lagos press. Instead, the Lagos press emphasised the gathering of school children of various denominations and described the Empire Day ceremonies as occasions for strengthening the feeling of unity within their colony.

Despite various splendid descriptions appearing in the Lagos press relating to

Empire Day, the meaning of Empire Day was not always understood by all attendants. Children may have “exploited the occasions” merely for enjoyment; marching, singing and enjoying treats of sweets and buns, “without actually imbibing the ideology behind the rhetoric” (Mangan 1990, 93). In 1914, the *Nigerian Pioneer* says that “the celebration of Empire Day in Lagos has now become an established custom”, and the meaning of the Day was clear for people in Lagos. However, in the other parts of Nigeria, where assimilation had been more recent, imperial sentiments could be “hardly expected” (29 May 1914, 6). In 1918, the same newspaper suggested a similar situation still continued:

For years past the European children of the Empire have no doubt realised to a certain extent what Empire Day means, but we believe that our children only during the last year or two have begun to realise the meaning of Empire Day. Before it was a holiday, welcome doubtless because it was a holiday and for the good time that it brought. But since the war has cast its gloom over land and has been a household word, we think that they must realise something of the import of Empire Day, and we are proud of the fact (31 May 1918, 6).

Empire Day celebrations served to help the educated elite not only to feel the attraction of the British monarchy, but also to recognise themselves as being in a consociation with other colonies. The repeatedly noted phrase, “this little gem of the King-Emperor’s possessions”, shows self-perceptions of Lagos by the Lagos press as one part of a big organisation, the British Empire (LS, 28 May 1913, 4).<sup>309</sup>

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<sup>309</sup> It would be useful to note that not all Empire Day celebrations succeeded. The Warri Correspondent of the *Nigerian Pioneer* reported that in Jekriland, pupils of three schools, Government, Anglican and Roman Catholic, gathered for the Day: “This year’s arrangements were a decided improvement on last year’s when we noticed an organized procession of half-naked, boys and girls with a good proportion of beard-grown man-boys (as pupils) parading through the streets and marching to the discordant strains of a couple of old flutes and a pair of broken drums, thus disturbing the peace of the Town with impunity” (NP, 14 June 1918,

Empire Day was initially invented as Children's Day, however, its meanings were transformed during WWI. The importance of Empire Day increased during WWI. Irrespective of its motto, all Lagos newspapers described Empire Day in more detail. Empire Day was used as the tool for disseminating imperial propaganda, especially during WWI, in order to justify the British position and encourage the support of the public in Nigeria. The British colonial administration in Nigeria viewed Empire Day celebrations as "a further opportunity of showing how England and her colonies are acting as one with regard to the war and its results from an imperial point of view".<sup>310</sup> The programme of the 1918 Empire Day celebration for the Forcados Government School included a procession of school children, saluting of the Union Jack flag, the singing of God Save the King, an address by the Governor, breakfast for school children, sports, as well as "Sham Fight—The English vs The Hopeless Germans" played by Captain Tonwe and Captain Osula, so that school children could easily "realize the benefits" and protection of Britain from "the horrors of the German rule" (NP, 31 May 1918, 6; 12 July 1918, 8). The Lagos press played an essential role in spreading this propaganda. In the notice of the forthcoming Empire Day, the *Pioneer* referred to the barbarous treatment of the population of the invaded districts of Italy by the Austro-Germans and encouraged the readers to appreciate the protection they enjoyed under British rule:

Let it be rubbed in home to the minds of everyone, the horrors in home we have been saved from by this Empire of ours let it be made clearly known that anyone who dares speak or think ill of her, is as one who sets out deliberately to murder his or her mother. In yoruba [sic] land we know what such a crime means and how it used to be punished (10 May 1918, 10).

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<sup>310</sup> Nigerian National Archive Ibadan, C.S.C. 19/4/1245, quoted in (Clarke 1986, 29).

Empire Day was reported by the *Standard* as the best occasion to make “all sons and daughters of the British Empire” appreciate their “responsibility” at “the great war now raging in Europe”, and as a symbol of “all of nobility, greatness, strength, justice, liberty and mercy” of the British Empire (29 May 1918, 4).

The descriptions of Empire Day differed slightly, according to the political attitudes and tastes of each Lagos newspaper. The least enthusiastic was the *Nigerian Chronicle*, a culturally-oriented newspaper with its own way of selecting the news, which generally just mentioned Empire Day in a few sentences. The *Nigerian Pioneer*, which has been called by the *Lagos Weekly Record* an “unofficial organ” of the British Colonial Government, was surely the most enthusiastic. The editor, Kitoyi Ajasa, never failed to insert whole transcripts of the Governor’s speech on Empire Day ceremonies, which all Lagos newspapers used to do at the Queen Victoria’s Jubilee in the late nineteenth century. The *Standard* devoted more space to reporting the events than the *Record*, which had a rather nationalistic attitude. Nevertheless, both newspapers described Empire Day with an entirely pro-British tone, justifying and even praising Queen Victoria’s reign, and British colonial rule in West Africa in general. Even in 1920, the *Record* admitted that “a special day each year for celebrations in connexion with the Empire is one of the happiest ideas ever conceived”, and reported Empire Day with justification of British rule under “our late Queen Her Majesty Victoria the Good”:

The British Empire, unlike other empires, is not the creation of a conquering Empire...The British Empire on the contrary is created by the combined effort of the whole British democracy, its merchants, sailors, soldiers, missionaries, and travellers, so that the Imperial interest has today become one with the national interest; that is the secret of the stability of this great Empire which we of West

Africa have the distinction of forming a part... The Union Jack stands today as the symbol of justice, and British rule stands for all that is pure and true and free, and bids fair to become a model for all the nations of the world (29 May 1920, 4).

In addition, the boundless enthusiasm and respect of the Lagos press for the British monarchy is noteworthy. In spite of the sense of mission of the Lagos press, which saw itself as a “representative” of the people and, therefore, sanctioned to criticise the Colonial Government, it seems the British monarchy was never a target of the press’s criticism. While proto-nationalists resisted rising racialism and showed resentment to some policies of the British Colonial Government, such as the proposal for a water rate tax in 1908 and 1915, and land tenure policy in 1912 and 1913,<sup>311</sup> the Lagos press did not lose its affection and respect for the British monarchy and supported British colonisation. Exaggerated and flattering phrases can be found in the reports of the demise of Queen Victoria in 1901, the coronation of King Edward VII in 1902, the demise of King Edward VII in 1910, and the coronation of King George V in 1911.<sup>312</sup>

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<sup>311</sup> From the beginning of the twentieth century, the Lagos press increasingly acted as a medium for criticising the policies of the Colonial Government. Notable examples are public protests to the proposal of water rate tax in 1908 and again in 1915. In 1908, the colonial administration, with the aim of improving the state of sanitation, decided to introduce pipe-borne water into Lagos and to collect a fee known as water rate. This led to a series of public protests and the organisation of the People’s Union, the first political party in Nigeria. The colonial administration was forced to abandon this levy in 1909, but with the completion of the Iju water works in 1915, Governor Lugard revived the idea of water rate payments (Okonkwo 1995, 7-20). This polarised the Lagos society—pro-and anti-water rate factions. The protests against the water rate tax also invoked government disaffection toward Eleko Eshugbayi, who opposed the imposition of water rates. Another example is the proposal of land tenure policy in 1912. This plan attempted to allow the Colonial Government to serve as trustee of African lands, vesting in the Governor the power to distribute lands. In June 1913, a group of Nigerian chiefs visited the Anti-Slavery and Aborigine Protection Society in London, appealing for the protection of the land rights of the indigenous people. However, the delegation could not attract the British press. The illness of the leading figure of the opposition group, John Payne Jackson, ended the land tenure campaign in 1914 (Cole 1975; Omu 1978, 160-166; Okonkwo 1995, 21-37).

<sup>312</sup> Examples of the articles on the demise of Queen Victoria in 1901 can be seen: (LWR, 2 February 1901, 3; LS, 3 April 1901, 5; 24 July 1901, 3); on the coronations of King Edward VII in 1902 (LS, 11 June 1902, 2-3; 13 August 1902, 2-3); the demise of King Edward VII in 1910 (LS, 11 May 1910, 4-5; NC, 13 May 1910, 2 & 7; 20 May 1910, 2); and the Coronation of King

For instance, the *Nigerian Chronicle* reported the funeral of King Edward VII as “A World-Wide Mourning”, and praised the king as a “peace-maker” who endeavoured to end the First World War and who had no colour prejudice, as evidenced by the fact that he became a personal friend of “Prince and Princess Fushimi of Japan” (13 May 1910, 2).

As we have seen in this section, the students’ gathering at the Empire Day Ceremony was described as the physical embodiment of imperial ideology, which reminded people in Nigeria of their connection with the British Empire. Although Empire Day celebrations continued up until the independence of Nigeria, it came to be severely criticised by nationalists. Yekini Tinubu, an editor of the *Nigerian Spokesman*,<sup>313</sup> asserted in the editorial entitled “Whose Empire Day?”,<sup>314</sup> on 30 May 1946, that people in Nigeria wanted “Freedom Day” instead of Empire Day, the British colonial liturgy of domination. The Zikist Movement<sup>315</sup> utilised the idea of Empire Day, a symbol of colonial domination, to invent Zik Day to commemorate Nnamdi Azikiwe’s birthday, 16 November as a symbol “to promote the idea of a Nigeria owned by Nigerians” (Falola 2009, 140).

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George V in 1911 (LWR, 24 June 1911, 3; 8 July 1911, 5-6).

<sup>313</sup> The *Nigerian Spokesman* was the Onisha-based paper of the Zik group of newspapers.

<sup>314</sup> Tinubu pointed out that: “Empire Day has no meaning to nascent Africans. What we want is Freedom Day, the day when the British government will decide either voluntarily or otherwise that the various colonial governments must return to London and let the dependent peoples depend on themselves... Empire Day is (a) minus in the New African Philosophy” quoted in page 117 in *The Foundation of Nigeria: Essays in Honour of Toyin Falola* (2003) by Adebayo Oyeade.

<sup>315</sup> Kolawole Balogun, a young Yoruba based in Lagos, founded the Zikist Movement on 16 February 1946, in collaboration with three other young men: M.C. K. Ajuluchukwu, Nduka Eze and Abiodun Aloba, journalists of the *Nigerian Advocate*, a newspaper owned by a Lebanese merchant. The Zikists credited Nnamdi Azikiwe with transforming anticolonial struggles and speeding up the pace of the movement leading to independence. The number of members reached a total of almost 3,000 and spread across the country (Falola 2009, 138).



## **6.5. WWI, 1914-1918: The War for the Protection of the British Empire and a “United Nigeria”**

The First World War began on 5 August 1914 when Britain declared war on Germany and ended on 11 November 1918 when Germany surrendered and signed the armistice agreement at Compiègne, France, for the cessation of hostilities on the Western Front. This section examines the attitude of the Lagos educated elite to WWI that began eight months after the political reformation of the Lagos colony in 1914; that is, the amalgamation of Southern and Northern Nigerian Protectorates. Focus is placed on the descriptions of war relief associations and fund-raising societies during WWI in Lagos newspapers. The Lagos press was supportive of the British side (the Allies) from the beginning; the war was represented as the Empire’s war, whereby people in Nigeria were expected to contribute as British subjects. Anti-German propaganda was successfully disseminated through the press, although some individuals initially showed sympathy for Germany because they had been good partners in trade and in the Christian missions since the middle of the nineteenth century. Accordingly, British rule in Africa was idealised and described as the realisation of justice and liberty, despite there had been growing oppositions toward policies of the Lagos Colonial Government. At the time of 1914, a great gulf between the *Nigerian Pioneer*, a pro-British Colonial Government newspaper, and other Lagos newspapers that had increasingly become nationalistic. WWI temporarily glossed over difference of opinions. This section also discusses how the descriptions of WWI influenced the self-perception of the educated elite, illustrating the strategies and methods of “construction of community” which resulted in the emerging image of a united Nigeria. The word “United Nigeria” appeared after amalgamation in 1914 in the Lagos press, and this term came to be

slightly more normalised in the course of WWI, which demanded a need for unity in the Empire.

British West African colonies, including Nigeria, played a relatively small role in the First World War. While an estimated 235,000 Africans in French African colonies contributed to European battles during WWI, there were no soldiers from British West African colonies fighting on the European front. Africans in British West African colonies, such as Gambia, Sierra Leone, Ghana and Nigeria, participated in the war as warriors and carriers in “Togoland and the Cameroon [sic: the British Cameroons] in West Africa, former German East Africa (Tanganyika/Tanzania) and former German South-West Africa (Namibia)” (Clarke 1986, 10). British West African combatants were composed of troops from the Royal West African Frontier Force and troops from voluntary enlistment<sup>316</sup> (Falola and Genova 2009, 369). 4,000 British West African combatants were involved in the Cameroon campaign in 1914 with 3,000 French West African troops. The West African soldiers had to endure terrifying conditions during the fighting, due to shortages of necessities: “there was very little clothing, few blankets and no boots”. 6,000 soldiers and 4,000 carriers were sent to East Africa prior to May 1917. In Nigeria, the Northern Nigerian Regiment merged with the Southern Nigerian Regiment at the end of 1913 and became the Nigerian Regiment, composed of five battalions, consisting primarily of Yoruba and Hausa troops.<sup>317</sup> They joined the war as

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<sup>316</sup> The Royal West African Frontier Force was a multi-battalion field force, formed by the British Colonial Office in 1900 to garrison the West African colonies of Nigeria, the Gold Coast, Sierra Leone and Gambia. The decision to raise this force was taken in 1897 because of concern about French colonial expansion in territories bordering on Northern Nigeria. The majority of the WAFF was raised from and based in Nigeria, but there were also units located in the Gold Coast, Sierra Leone and the Gambia. During WWI, they were composed of four units: The Queen’s Own Nigerian Regiment (9 battalions), the Gold Coast Regiment (5 battalions), the Royal Sierra Leone Regiment (1 battalion) and the Gambia Regiment (2 companies) (Gann and Duignan 1978, 106-116; Osuntokun 1979).

<sup>317</sup> Three battalions were stationed in Northern Nigeria and two of them stayed in the South.

part of the Royal West African Frontier Force (Osuntokun 1979, 169). Out of 4,000 Nigerian carriers who participated in the East African campaign in 1916, 1,000 were hospitalised and 700 died (Osuntokun 1979, 247; Clarke 1986, 13).<sup>318</sup>

Apart from manpower, Nigeria's financial contribution to the war effort is also worth mentioning. One and a half million (1,500,000) pounds and at least 127,553 pounds were raised from local subscriptions to war relief funds.<sup>319</sup> Muslim emirs in northern Nigeria contributed 45,000 pounds each year during the war (Clarke 1986, 16). Regarding the economic impact of WWI on Nigeria, there was a temporary drop in shipping due to the ban on trade with Germany. In 1913, before WWI, more than half Nigeria's export products, and most notably four-fifths of its palm kernels, went to Germany. However, from September 1914, it was necessary for Nigeria to re-channel its trade structure as a result of the enforced displacement of German traders. The property of German firms in Lagos was sold and acquired by British firms, consequently, increasing the profits of British firms. The year 1917 marked a positive change for Lagos, when Britain's need for vegetable oils meant that exports of palm oil returned to normal (Coleman 1958, 187; Osuntokun 1979, 21-57; Clarke 1986, 16; Olukoju 2004, 48-80).

Although a relatively prosperous period in the Colony of Nigeria arose from the import-export trade during WWI, people suffered as the standard of living dropped. The Lagos newspapers reported a rise in living costs as well as shortages of necessities, including food, imported articles and paper. This was due to the disruption in trade. The price of commodities and rent rose. Whilst three tubers of yams cost 1 shilling in the

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<sup>318</sup> For more details on Nigerian soldiers during WWI see (Osuntokun 1979, 172 & 237-269).

<sup>319</sup> Voluntary private contributions in aid of war charities in Nigeria reached £84,928 at the beginning of 1918 (NP, 4 January 1918, 9). Out of the total donation for war charities, £127,553, £50,000 was collected for the British Red Cross Society (LWR, 14 August 1920, 5).

pre-World War I period around 1914, it became 2 shillings 6 pence in 1918, and 2 shillings-3 shillings 6 pence in 1923. Imported articles like tobacco, soap and candles cost three times as much as the pre-war period (*Lagos Blue Book* 1884, 96; *Blue Book of Nigeria Colony and Protectorate* 1922, 417; Olukoju 2000, 126-132).

#### 6.5.1. Fund Raising Associations

Nigeria's relatively low manpower participation in WWI seems to be a common notion among historians (Coleman 1958, 187). Nevertheless, as in other British colonies, various fund-raising societies were established in support of the British forces. Sir Harry Johnston, President of the Royal African Society in England, referred to Nigeria's "splendid" response to war relief funds at a luncheon meeting on 28 March 1919, stating that as well as their "leading and decisive part in the conquest of German East Africa and the Cameroons" Nigerians had "shown themselves thoroughly loyal portions of the British Empire", and had "proved their loyalty through contribution of money and produce".<sup>320</sup>

Some war relief charities mentioned in the Lagos press were the Red Cross Society, the King George's Fund for Sailors,<sup>321</sup> the British Red Cross Fund, the War Relief Fund, the National Relief Fund organised by the Prince of Wales, the Nigerian Overseas Forces Comforts Fund, the Nigerian Aeroplane Fund, the Cameroon Meat Fund, and the King George's Fund. What is most characteristic about these war relief charities is that they organised events in order to collect subscriptions and thus provided leisure activities during the war. Apart from collecting direct donations from individuals,

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<sup>320</sup> "The Africa of the Immediate Future," *Journal of the Royal African Society*, volume 18, no.71 (1919), page 163, partly cited in (Coleman 1958, 187).

<sup>321</sup> The fund still exists today in the name of "Seafarers UK".

these funding bodies organised events, such as concerts, organ recitals, “native dances”, sports competitions and cinematography, to collect funds.

The editor and proprietor of the *Nigerian Pioneer*, Kitoyi Ajasa, served as an important member of the fund-raising movement. In 1915 he masterminded the Cameroon Meat Fund, which provided foods and necessities for carriers and warriors participating in the Cameroon campaign.<sup>322</sup> Concerts and tennis matches were organised for the Meat Fund (NP, 17 September 1915, 9). The *Pioneer* also organised the War Challenge Cup football game to raise funds (28 December 1918, 12).

The fund-raising movement provided an opportunity for various people in different denominations to work for the same purpose. Just after Britain declared War on Germany on 4 August 1914, several meetings were held in order to discuss how Nigeria could contribute to the war. On this emergent occasion, the church was used, not for religious purposes, but as a public hall, and even a prayer meeting became secular space. On 18 August 1914, there was a Special Prayer meeting for the Great War conducted by the Rev. T. A. J. Ogunbiyi at Holy Trinity Church, Ebute Ero by special request of the Lagos chiefs. Members listed as being present included 4 “native” Christian elite, 5 “native” chiefs and 18 Muslims. It was reported as a “strange service”, with all, including the chiefs and Muslims, standing up spontaneously at the singing of the National Anthem (LS, 23 September 1914, 8).

The various groups in Nigeria, including Europeans, the educated African elite, the traditional elite, *obas* and chiefs, Muslims and Syrians were involved. There was a cinematographic exhibition prepared by the Syrian community of Lagos in aid of the British and French Red Cross Societies (LS, 26 July 1916, 4). Women in the communities sold medals and badges to raise funds, and subscribed to funds, most

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<sup>322</sup> Donations from 34 Lokoja subscribers amounted to £12.19.0 (NP, 22 October 1915, 9).

notably the Nigerian (Cameroon) Forces Widows and Orphans Fund<sup>323</sup> and the Queen's Star and Garter Building Fund<sup>324</sup> (LS, 18 October 1916, 5). The list of individual subscribers to the Nigerian Aeroplane Fund included 11 Syrians in Lagos, 21 European staffs and 41 "native" clerical staffs in Lagos and Apapa and 49 individual subscribers in Ibadan. What is impressive about this fund is that artisanal staff, usually with moderate salaries, such as woodworking machinists, blacksmiths and bricklayers in an Apapa Dockyard contributed £31.15.6 and labourers in Ibadan Moor Plantation contributed £2.13.3 to the fund (NP, 22 October 1915, 9). Several events were held to collect funds, amounting to £4500 in total, which paid for the furnishment of three airplanes for Great Britain (LS, 16 February 1916, 7). In August 1918, amusements and sports were organised under the patronage of Prince Eleko and his chiefs in aid of the King George's Fund when "Yoruba acrobatic dancers performed clever and daring feats in front of the Eleko and Chiefs, and for all the time held the attention of a large audience" (NP, 30 August 1918, 6).

The biggest fund-raising organisation and the one most frequently reported in the Lagos press was the Lagos Committee of the British Red Cross Society. From 1915, the Nigerian Committee of the British Red Cross Society held an annual fund-raising campaign called "Our Day". This was the fund-raising event to provide help for thousands of the sick and wounded of His Majesty's Forces, organised by the Colonial Government with the assistance of the educated elite. The Honorary Secretary, T. F. Burrowes stated that "As British subjects it is your privilege to insist by subscribing to this fund". On 19 September 1917, public meetings were held at the Glover Memorial Hall in order to discuss arrangements for fund-raising entertainments, and the

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<sup>323</sup> 72 individual subscribers donated £ 166.3.6 in 1915 (LS, 4 August 1915, 5).

<sup>324</sup> This fund, collected from women of 33 townships in Abeokuta (such as Erunbe, Ake, Ijeun and Ibara) amounted to £ 302.18.8 (NP, 16 February 1917, 11).

representatives of European officials, merchants, and clergies and “native” officials, such as Henry Carr and S. H. Pearse, as well as Michal Elias, the head of the Syrians in Lagos were present.<sup>325</sup>

In the autumn of 1917, various events for raising funds were held at the administration centres, such as Lagos, Abeokuta, Ibadan, Kaduna and Calabar. Admission cost was 5 shillings and the concert was held on Our Day in Lagos, 6 October 1917. Along with the usual concerts and sports competitions, an ethnographical exhibition, which had become a popular feature at exhibitions in Europe by this time, was prepared. An “African Village” was reported to be “complete in all detail with weavers, tom-tom beaters, dancers, the chief’s house and a beer-stall. The only thing missing was the odour of sanctity” (NP, 12 October 1917, 13). At least 19 events were held in Lagos between October and November in 1917, with subscriptions amounting to £1286<sup>326</sup> (NP, 30 November 1917, 5). On Our Day at Abeokuta, the programme (see Plate 9) included a bazaar, a dress ball, concerts, sports competitions—athletics, tennis, clock golf, ping pong, billiards—and native dances like the gelede dance (dancing with masks) and agere dance (dancing with stilts) (NP, 12 October 1917, 14).

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<sup>325</sup> The audience of events for fund-raising usually did not include ordinary indigenous people in Nigeria. Some events invited European officials and merchants as well as “principal natives”, and others were explicitly for “natives”. Thomas H. Jackson, the editor of LWR served as manager of special committee of “native gentlemen” (NP, 28 September 1917, 8).

<sup>326</sup> Total subscribed in aid of the Fund of the British Red Cross Society for 1915: £13,125, 1916: £14,625, 1917: £25,000 (NP, 30 November 1917, 5).

## Plate 9: Programme of "Our Day" at Abeokuta

14 THE NIGERIAN PIONEER. [Friday, October 12th, 1917.]

# ABEOKUTA.

## "OUR DAY"

in aid of

### BRITISH RED CROSS SOCIETY.

**BAZAAR at Museum Grounds,**  
Saturday, October 13th, 1917, 3 p.m. to 7 p.m.  
**FANCY DRESS BALL at Electric Light Station,**  
Monday, October 15th, 8.15 p.m. to 3 a.m.  
**Football Match at Race Course,**  
Wednesday, October 17th at 5 p.m.  
**ATHLETIC SPORTS at Race Course,**  
Thursday, October 18th at 2.30 p.m.  
**GRAND CONCERT at Grammar School,**  
Friday, October 19th at 8.15 p.m.

### NATIVE DANCES AT AKE SQUARE.

**MONDAY** 22nd October Kete Dance 7 p.m. to 12 p.m.  
**TUESDAY** 23rd " Kriboto Dance 7 p.m. to 12 p.m.  
**WEDNESDAY** 24th " Efe Gelede 7 p.m. to 1 a.m.  
**THURSDAY** 25th " Gelede Dance (dancing with masks) 3 p.m. to 10 p.m.  
**FRIDAY** 26th " Agere Dance (dancing on stilts) 7 p.m. to 1 a.m.  
**SATURDAY** 27th " Agere Dance (dancing on stilts) 7 p.m. to 1 a.m.

### RED CROSS SUNDAY, October 21st.

Tennis, Clock Golf, Bridge, Billiards,  
Ping Pong Tournaments.

**RED CROSS FLAGS: Adults, 6d. each. Children 3d. each.**  
**COMMITTEE MEMBERS' BADGES: 2s. 6d. each.**

Each item of the arrangements in the above Programme is under the management of a Sub-Committee of highly influential ladies and gentlemen—European and Native—who are sparing no pains to secure the financial success of "OUR DAY" in Abeokuta.

Subscriptions are also being received by Mrs. W. CHEVALLIER SYER, The Residency, Abeokuta.

A. EDUN,  
for the Abeokuta RED CROSS GENERAL COMMITTEE.

PRINTED AT THE C.M.S. BOOKSHOP PRESS, 16, BROAD STREET, LAGOS, AND PUBLISHED BY KIFORI AJASA, AT 7, WILLIAMS STREET, LA

(NP, 12 October 1917, 14)

The Lagos press was supportive towards Britain and the Allies in WWI and encouraged people to contribute to the relevant war relief funds. There was initially some opposition of people in Egbaland and Lagos to the collection of war relief funds, due to the fact it was just after the Ijemo crisis,<sup>327</sup> however, it was soon dismissed from

<sup>327</sup> The Ijemo rising and subsequent massacre of Abeokuta citizens by Colonial forces in July and August 1914 resulted in the nullification of the 1893 treaty of Egba independence, on 30 September 1914. For detail, see Osuntokun (1979, 103-110).



the majority of the educated elite (LWR, 10 October 1914, 3). The Lagos press usually tried to persuade those opposing the collection of funds that it was the duty of imperial citizens to support them. This will be shown in detail in the next part.

It is clear that the fund-raising movement evoked a competitive spirit amongst different British colonies, between Northern and Southern Nigeria, as well as among individuals. The *Standard*, at the outbreak of the First World War, pointed out that the Committee of the National Relief Fund had already issued subscription lists for collection of donations from the Gold Coast: “In Gold Coast we learn that thousands upon thousands bags of cocoa have been donated to the Fund as that Country’s share we learn also that the value of that donation is about a quarter of a million of money” (23 September 1914, 8). The Honourable Secretary of the Lagos Committee of the British Red Cross Society, T. F. Burrowes, commented that the subscriptions from Lagos were poor compared with those from Ibadan, which stimulated the competitive feeling of the people in Lagos who were proud to consider themselves the civilised centre of Nigeria (NP, 28 September 1917, 15). Lists of subscribers regularly appeared in the Lagos press, encouraging people to contribute to the funds by stimulating competitive feelings among the educated elite and by satisfying the donators’ desire to demonstrate charitableness, wealth and respectability.<sup>328</sup>

In 1918, the *Pioneer* jubilantly reported Nigeria’s “splendid” efforts and “magnificent response” to the British Red Cross Society whose Nigerian section came 7<sup>th</sup> in the whole British Empire.<sup>329</sup> Total overseas contributions, in reply to the 1917

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<sup>328</sup> The lists also played a role of reminding individuals or groups that promised to pay and hadn’t done by inserting a few comments.

<sup>329</sup> Six communities in the whole world who contributed more to the fund than Nigeria were: The Dominion of Canada (£486,155), The Commonwealth of Australia (£312,170), United States of America (£205,833), Egypt (£143,690), The Straits Settlements (£123,679), The Argentine Republic (£52,218). For more on contributions from colonies and dominions during WWI, see “European War 1914-16 Further Correspondence Regarding Gifts from the Oversea

“Our Day” appeal, amounted to £1,868,534, and Nigeria’s contribution of £48,528 was:

larger than those of New Zealand, South Africa and Ceylon, more than double Central America and the West Indies, all the rest of West Africa and all combined East Africa, and more than treble the contributions of the Federated Malay States and Ceylon... We feel sure every one in Nigeria, irrespective of colour, race or creed must feel a proud pleaser in knowing that, in the lists of subscribers to the British Red Cross Society Nigeria, yes the young Colony of yesterday, very young in comparison to the six mighty and wealthy communities which headed her in the list of contribution, obtained the 7<sup>th</sup> place. We did not give as to a Charity, we gave gladly and proudly in the aid of our soldiers fighting for Empire and King (26 July 1918, 7).

#### 6.5.2. Propaganda and Representations of WWI in the Lagos Press

When World War I broke out in 1914, the Nigerian press was comprised of five weekly owner-edited newspapers, the *Lagos Weekly Record*, the *Lagos Standard*, the *Times of Nigeria*, the *Nigerian Chronicle* and the *Nigerian Pioneer*. The former three had a relatively anti-governmental attitude, but all Lagos press became pro-British and supported the Allies during WWI. Apart from the *Nigerian Chronicle* which did not change its style and even strengthened its culture-oriented character and preference for philosophical subjects,<sup>330</sup> the Lagos press played an important role as advertiser of British propaganda.

In order to advertise British resolutions as justice, the Colonial Government distributed pamphlets and churches held sermons containing propaganda of justice in the Allied Powers, whose common cause was said to be the maintenance of “Liberty,

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Dominions and Colonies” [Cd. 7875] (page 83-90 on Nigeria) in *British House of Commons Parliamentary Paper*.

<sup>330</sup> The *Nigerian Chronicle* during WWI occasionally inserted a list of subscribers to National Relief funds, but it did not report details of the war.

Justice and Freedom". At the end of 1916, 3,000 copies of a pamphlet entitled "England and the War", which explained British objectives and ideals in fighting the War, were distributed by the Colonial Government to school children, so that "they took the information home and spread it through the village" (Clarke 1986, 26-30). As has been discussed in section 4, the Colonial Government also made use of Empire Day celebrations as a tool for disseminating imperial propaganda during WWI. As well as these methods of propaganda, the Lagos press contributed to attempts to diffuse the idea that the British had "declared war on Germany in defence of the treaty guaranteeing the political independence and territorial integrity of Belgium" (Omu 1978, 216), emphasising the importance of solidarity as well as guaranteeing autonomy.

There were three characteristics in Lagos newspaper descriptions of WWI. Firstly, the Central Powers, especially German troops, were represented as extremely cruel. Many West African traders had a pro-German attitude due to the lower customs and lenient credit facilities of German trading firms (Osuntokun 1979, viii & 72). At the beginning of WWI, the *Pioneer* quoted the statement of the Gold Coast Colonial Government that admitted to the long-lasting friendly relationship with the German people in West Africa:

Some of them [Germans] have lived for many years in [West Africa], engaged to the benefit of the population in missionary, medical and mercantile work, that some of them are our personal friends and that from all we have received acts of kindness and assistance. They are entitled to more than our charity, they are entitled to our chivalry (28 August 1914, 8).

However, it seems that the British Government's anti-German campaign successfully influenced the Nigerian press, and from early 1915, the Nigerian press

became increasingly anti-German. In October 1916, “papers relating to German atrocities and breaches of the rules of War in Africa” were furnished by the Colonial Government. In response to the voluminous papers with “realistic photographs of those who have been the victims of Hunnish methodical barbarity and refined cruelty”, the *Record* commented rejecting any positive aspects of the German people:

The bare mention of the name of Germany as a colonising power in West Africa conjures up in the minds of the natives a state of affairs which may be fittingly described as *Pandemonium in Mundo* and which invariably stirs up from the depths of their souls the most repulsive feelings of horror, of intense disgust and acute bitterness against the fiendish orgies of German tropical rule (7 October 1916, 4)

In response to the Governor’s speech, at the prize-giving ceremony of the Wesleyan Boys’ High School in Lagos, which was about a possible catastrophe that the people in Nigeria might experience without the “protection of the Union Jack”, the *Pioneer* introduced a gruesome story entitled “Corpse Conversion Factory” sent by its London correspondent. It was believed the Germans utilised “A Mill where the dead bodies of Soldiers are by some chemical process, converted into lubricating oils, and food for hogs and fowls—creatures which are afterwards consumed by human beings—a sort of refined cannibalism” (22 June 1917, 7), and contributions to the Nigerian Overseas Contingents Comforts Fund were reported as the way to avoid similar catastrophes happening in Nigeria.

Secondly, British involvement in WWI was justified and reported as necessary for maintaining “Liberty and Justice” in the world. The *Standard* reported the public meeting for the commemoration of the first anniversary of the Great War on 4 August 1916, which had been “celebrated in all parts of the United Kingdom and throughout the

Empire with the utmost Patriotism and Solemnity”:

That on this second anniversary of the declaration of a righteous war, this meeting of the citizens of Lagos regards its inflexible determination to continue to a vicious end the struggle in maintenance of those ideals of **Liberty and Justice** which are the common and sacred cause of the Allies (2 August 1916, 5).

Despite press's growing opposition to the Lugard administration in relation to press censorship in 1915 and imposition of water rate tax in 1916,<sup>331</sup> the atmosphere of the emergency of the war overwhelmed criticism during WWI. From the beginning of the twentieth century, the Lagos press increasingly acted as a medium of criticising policies of the Colonial Government. Notable examples are public protests to the proposal of water rate tax in 1908 and again in 1915 and to the proposal for land tenure policy in 1912. The Criminal Code Bill for the regulation of press activity in July 1915 and plans to levy a water rate in 1916, inflamed the public and some of the traditional elite and *Saro* educated elite. However, the Lagos press adopted a conciliatory line (Omu 1978, 212-215; Clarke 1986, 27). Even the anti-governmental *Record* encouraged people to “think imperially”, quoting the words of the late Joseph Chamberlain, the former head of the Colonial Office. Thomas H. Jackson attempted to encourage people to subscribe to the Nigerian Overseas Contingents Comforts Fund<sup>332</sup> and said:

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<sup>331</sup> For the regulations for the purpose of controlling press's criticism toward the Colonial Government, see Chapter 2. The *Times of Nigeria* was opposed to the Colonial Government and the editor, James Bright Davies was jailed for a half year. Davies was accused of attempting to foment enmity against the Lagos Government with two anti-British articles published in December 1915, and fined £100, in February, 1916. He was again accused of seditious publication against the Government and was this time sentenced to imprisonment for six months the following year (Omu 1978, 189-194).

<sup>332</sup> Out of a total amount of £2,313 in 1917, £86 were expended on providing food (palm oil, gari, beans, peppers, onion, bullocks, yams, bread, agidi, kola, salt) for the recent draft of about 2,000 men. The cooking was carried out by the Erelu and other native women, and a sum of £110 was distributed to wounded men in East Africa (NP, 22 June 1917, 9-10).

our mission merely seeks to impress vividly upon the minds of the natives of Nigeria the absolute necessity of “learning to think imperially” as the best and safest mental attitude that could be assumed by every dusky son of the Empire for guaranteeing success and stability to the British Empire during the most critical period of its existence; and we venture to think that no more fitting occasion has arisen for inculcating this wholesome lesson of “learning to think imperially” than present urgent call for voluntary subscriptions in aid of the Nigerian Overseas Contingents Comforts Fund (5 May 1917, 2).

The first lesson in learning to “think imperially” was to admit that Nigeria was a part of the British Empire. People had to accept the “scientific truism of social evolution”, namely, that individual units were subordinate to the greater interests of the longer-lived social organism. Therefore interests of the British Empire, to which Nigeria belonged, should be prioritised (ibid).

The third point relates to the above statement of the *Record*. The unity of the British Empire, of which Nigeria was part, was emphasised. The Lagos press accordingly argued it was the responsibility of Nigerians, as citizens of the British Empire, to contribute to the war. According to the *Pioneer*, despite the fact that the “British Empire is peopled by many races of men, differing from one another in colour, language and attainments”, it was necessary for her subjects to bear in mind that they were “All Citizens of One Empire” (16 October 1914, 8). The editorial entitled “Our Duty” stated: “Empire expects every man to do his duty. Obviously what is required of each is his capacity to do his best” (NP, 20 August 1915, 6). The *Record* also suggested that Nigerians should take “imperial duty” seriously (28 August 1915, 4). It was repeated that “the fate of Nigeria is indissolubly linked with that of the British Empire” (NP, 22 June 1917, 7).

The Lagos press repeatedly represented people in Nigeria as citizens of the British

Empire. For instance, in an article on John Randle's speech at the public meeting held in Tinubu Square, on 4 August 1916, he was reported to assert the following:

Our presence here this afternoon shows that we heartily endorse every word of the sentiments therein expressed and which are the only ones possible for us as loyal citizens of the British Empire...let us not forget the wider principle that we are citizens of the British Empire. We are members of **a family**, whose noble traditions in the past were founded on **Liberty and Justice**; and there is no family however deeply attached its members are to one another that has not its periods of stress and storm (LWR, 5 & 12 August 1916, 3).

Here is an example that shows how Empire and colonial relationships were understood in Lagos newspapers. The colonies, including Nigeria, are described as part of a big organisation called the Empire with the metaphor of "hand and fingers":

As the colonies are just so many parts of one great whole their interests are constantly to be referred to that of the great Empire of which they are but parts... We are asking for Union and not unity in the higher interests of the Empire, for identity in all essential points for the general case which still leaves ample room for differences upon subsidiary interests, and we are saying in effect, that for this great case we can be as one and indivisible as the *hand* is one, for other interests answering to the diversities inherent in our nature we can be as separate, different and disparate as the *fingers* of the hand (NP, 7 September 1917, 7).

In addition, when Britain declared war on Germany on 4 August 1914, it was just eight months after the amalgamation of the Southern and Northern Nigeria Protectorate. The term "United Nigeria" frequently appeared in the Lagos press. What should be noted is that the phrase "United Nigeria" and "imperial loyalty" were reported in the same context of assisting the war (LWR, 12 September 1914, 2). The necessity for the united action of "Nigeria" was emphasised in the Lagos press. Nigeria, not Lagos or

Yorubaland, was described as one entity. Despite the fact that people in Southern and Northern Nigeria had little contact in their daily lives, WWI could have reminded at least literate people that they were one nation under one government.

The Lagos press during WWI aroused a greater sense of attachment to Britain. The *Standard* wrote in August 1914 “our destiny is indissolubly linked with that of England, and we must rise and fall with her” (Clarke 1986, 29). The expression of Britain as a “Mother Country” was repeatedly used. It was praised that among all the European Allied Powers, Britain alone did not impose compulsory military service on her subjects: “The Mother Country has therefore been making huge sacrifices in men, money and material for the defence of the commonwealth, the defence of the dominions, colonies and dependencies” (LWR, 5 May 1917, 2).<sup>333</sup>

### 6.5.3. Rising Nationalism and Growing Interest in Japan

It has been pointed out that interactions with other educated Africans in British West African countries and America became the incentive for the nationalist movement in Nigeria. Osuntokun (1979) points out that WWI became an incentive for educated Nigerians to be sceptical about the British Empire. The amalgamation of the Southern

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<sup>333</sup> Furthermore, not only the war, but other subjects were also reported in a pro-British tone. For instance, in a letter from Adeoye Deniga, on 12 October 1916 to the *Standard*, he criticised a “queer” practice of spelling certain Yoruba words to suit English pronunciation—such as Ido became Iddo, Subuola became Shubuola, Ebute Meta became Ebute Metta, and Dosunmu became Docemo—resulting in loss of correct writing. Instead of attempting to preserve the Yoruba language from the point of view of radical cultural nationalist who opposed Europeanisation, he referred to an episode about Queen Victoria: “If the tendency on our part is not to obliterate the beauty of the Yoruba Language... a language so magnanimously pronounced by no less a Personage than the late Queen Victoria to be ‘soft and melodious’ on the occasion of the presentation to her Majesty of The Rt Rev. Samuel Ajayi Crowther at Windsor, on the 18<sup>th</sup> November 1851, then it is time a halt is made for its orthography” (LS, 18 October 1916, 5).



and Northern Nigeria Protectorates in 1914 was received with joy by the Lagos press, although the educated elite soon began to feel discontented with Governor Lugard's administration, which placed more importance on traditional rulers, emirs and chiefs, than on the educated elite. During WWI, the Colonial Government came to have a more protective attitude towards criticism by the Lagos press. This was partly because of the Water Rate agitation in 1916 and also due to the fear of possible revolt against the war.

Despite their generally supportive attitude toward British policies during WWI, the educated elite were not blind believers in the British Empire. Sometimes they were questioning the policies and resolution of the British Colonial Government. One of the subjects that evoked agitation was with regard to the idea of the Empire Resources Development Committee. This reflected the idea that the colonies should pay for the British war debt. When the idea was raised in the Nigerian Council in 1915, all of the Lagos press including the pro-British *Nigerian Pioneer* attended. The *Standard* claimed that the Nigerian Council<sup>334</sup> and the Legislative Council should be popularly elected, and unless they could enjoy the "full rights and privileges of British citizenship", at least in Nigeria, it would not be fair to be asked for huge contributions for the Imperial War Loan of Britain. In December 1915, it was decided by the Nigerian Council, "a body in which the vast Native inhabitants of Nigeria have no elected representatives, pledged that the people would pay six million pounds towards the Imperial War loan after the war". The *Standard* also argued that "As we are being now considered fit to take up **burdens of British citizenship** we must press for the privileges and advantages of British citizenship" (LS, 24 May 1916, 4; Osuntokun 1979, 52-56 & 86-87;

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<sup>334</sup> One of the innovations of Governor Lugard was the "annual meeting to be called the 'Nigerian Council', consisting of officials and non-officials from all over the protectorate and Lagos. They would sit and listen to the Governor deliberating on the past, present and future of the country. They might talk and move resolutions which, however, would not be binding, for the council had no authority whatever" (Osuntokun 1979, 13).

Killingray 1982, 204).

As the weakness of Britain was revealed, the nationalist movement in Nigeria was promoted, which consequently led to “the formation of the National Congress of British West Africa, which met in Accra, the Gold Coast, in 1920 with representatives from all British West Africa being present” (Osuntokun 1979, 91). Moreover, the statements of President Wilson and Prime Minister Lloyd George regarding self-determination gave aspirations for their nationalist activities to Nigerian leaders (Coleman 1958, 187-188).

Simultaneously, we can see the growing interest in Japan in the Lagos press.<sup>335</sup> One of the first articles on Japan appeared in the *Standard* in 1896, which contained reports by the Yokohama correspondent on ethnographical descriptions of Japan and Japanese women, modest and traditional, yet to be civilised and not at all influenced by “New Women” movement in Europe (5 February 1896, 3). The victory of Japan in the Russo-Japanese War 1904-1905 had been perceived as a massive encouragement to the non-Western nations, and even as the first step towards the eradication of Western domination. Japan’s prestige accordingly rose greatly during WWI, and she became a model for imitation and admiration amongst people under colonial rule, for having succeeded in adopting modern technology without losing her national identity and traditional customs. In Lagos newspapers, Japan was also described as an example of successful non-Western modernity. Cultural aspects of Japan also attracted the Lagos press, especially the *Nigerian Chronicle*, as discussed in Chapter 2.

At the beginning of WWI, the *Standard* in the editorial “The Sunrise

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<sup>335</sup> According to the content analysis of the *Lagos Weekly Record* 1892-1920 (except for 1913-15) using the below electronic database, a number of short news or articles that mentioned Japan increased from 15 between 1892 and 1896 to 41 between 1916 and 1920 (World Newspaper Archive, African Newspapers Collection [database online]; available from NewsBank /Readex, accessed on 31 August- 2 September 2010).

Kingdom”,<sup>336</sup> introduced Japan as one of the Allies, and described its history from the sixth century, the first Emperor’s reign, to 1867 when the Sogun (Samurai leader) resigned and the Mikado (Emperor) went back to the head of the country (25 November 1914, 4).<sup>337</sup> After the war, the *Record* mentioned Japan in the editorial “Post-war Ideals and the Educated Native in Nigeria” as the model that Africa should follow. The “sudden rise of Japan into world politics” was reported as a result of “Japanising Western methods”: adapting western civilisation while still “retaining her original customs and institutions, her religious code of ethics, family life, dress, food, etc”. It was asserted that Africa could achieve a similar development, not “through westernisation of African ideals but through *Africanisation of western ideals*, that is to say, the adaptation of western ideas to African environment by a process of *selection and assimilation*” (4 March to 31 May 1919, 4-5).<sup>338</sup>

It is noteworthy that in addition to the influence of Japan, wider debates were taking place on the African way of progress. As Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 have discussed, Edward Wilmot Blyden’s idea of progress on race lines had a strong influence on British

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<sup>336</sup> Marco Polo, the Venetian traveller, gave the name Zipan-gu, or Sunrise Kingdom, to these islands in the early part of the thirteenth century.

<sup>337</sup> The *Lagos Standard* opined: “As a people the Japanese are the superior of the Asiatics physically, socially and intellectually. The features and characteristics of two races long since commingled are discernible and plainly tell the story that the relation of conqueror and conquered exists. Their inferiority of physique to Europeans is probably due to their occupation... Once an insignificant power in the eyes of Europe, the still fresh memories of the Russo-Japanese war, have won them recognition. And who knows what else will follow?” (LS, 25 November 1914, 4)

<sup>338</sup> The article continued as follows: “The educated native in Nigeria or West Africa must therefore endeavour to discover a way for [sic:of] *Africanising* western [sic] methods. Japan has forced her way into the fore-front of World Politics as a first class Power without losing her national characteristics or racial idiosyncrasies... She has adopted Western methods in so far as they enabled her to maintain unimpaired her relations with the external world; but short of this, she is Japanese to the core and pays unstinted devotion to Bushido, Shintoism (the national religion) and her traditional customs and institutions... The West African native can do likewise and in order to build up a healthy and progressive civilisation and a vigorous nationality, destined to compel respect from the external world, the golden door of precept and example opens out not to the West but to the East via Japan” [*Italic font inserted according to original text*] (LWR, 4 March to 31 May 1919, 4-5).

colonies in West Africa (Zachernuk 1991). Interactions with the educated African elite in other parts of British West Africa, such as J. E. Casely Hayford in the Gold Coast (July 1967), as well as discussions developed among West African students studying in Britain or in the United State also had an impact on intellectuals in Nigeria (Prais 2008). While the impact of West African and Black Atlantic intellectuals cannot be overlooked, Japan was another important inspiration for the educated elite in Lagos when developing the idea of alternative progress.

## **6.6. Conclusion**

This chapter has presented debates and practices associated with celebrations and representations of the British Empire and of relating voluntary associations reported in Lagos newspapers between 1880 and 1920, and has illustrated how they reflected the changing self-perceptions of Lagos intellectuals. It has attempted to bridge the gap between the academic fields of African history and British imperial history. While this chapter has a similar focus to that of “new” imperial history, whose interest is in the culture of the empire, which has been mutually constructed between colony and imperial centre, it has attempted to apply a new framework, a “para-colonial” framework, in order to examine Nigerian experiences of the British Empire from the “colonised” points of views.

As we have seen, fund-raising activities during WWI, the celebrations of the British Empire and related associational activities, gave the Lagos educated elite a sense of belonging to a world power, having an association with other colonies, an allegiance to the British monarchy, as well as the hope of unity in their society, either in Lagos, in Yoruba or later in Nigeria. What is more, these events and related associational

activities caused the educated elite to reconfirm their material and moral advancement, accordingly promoting an optimistic view of the future of the Colony of Lagos and later Nigeria, which was one part of a “great Empire”.

Newspaper descriptions of the British Empire celebrations and WWI emphasised Lagos/Yoruba/Nigeria as one entity needing to be united. Experiencing the celebrations of the British Empire, as well as those of WWI, during which the solidarity of the Empire was emphasised by the Lagos press, made the educated elite aware of the importance of achieving a unified Lagos society, a consolidated Yoruba nation, or a united Nigeria.

The British Empire was represented in the Lagos press as a provider of modernisation for Nigeria. The Lagos educated elite expected protection from an authority; Britain. It was believed that the people in power, the Lagos Colonial Government, had an obligation to provide material improvement and peace in the colony. While proto-nationalists resisted rising racialism and resented some policies of the British Colonial Government, the Lagos press did not lose affection and respect for the British monarchy and retained its justification for British colonisation. It is important to note here that the British Empire, for the educated elite, was not always one consistent entity. Their fervent loyalty to the Queen and Kings and simultaneous opposition to the Colonial Government regimes show that the educated elite had a firm affection for the monarchical aspect of the British Empire, but they were often hostile to the Colonial Government on the spot.

This chapter also explored Yoruba ethnogenesis in secular public space by means of the Lagos press. It ascertained that the 1880s and 1890s was a critical period for change in the usage of the term “Yoruba” in Lagos newspapers. Lagos newspaper articles on Queen Victoria’s Jubilee celebrations and the annexation of Yorubaland by

the Colonial Government between 1886 and 1895 assisted in the normalisation of the term “Yoruba” in a pan-Yoruba sense. Consequently, “Yoruba” in a pan-Yoruba meaning came to appear more frequently in the context of culture and language from the early twentieth century. Although the focus of this thesis is on the early period of the Lagos press, between 1880 and 1920, a more diachronic usage of the term “Yoruba” will be ascertained by further examination of Lagos newspapers of the 1920s onward.

Additionally, three points should be mentioned on the newspaper descriptions of the celebrations of the British Empire and WWI and relating voluntary associations.

Firstly, while the idea of empire functioned as a model of unity for Lagos, Yoruba or Nigeria, newspaper descriptions of the ceremonies of the British Empire show that these associational activities and ceremonies also assisted in maintaining the educated elite’s cultural privilege over the illiterate mass. Only a restricted number of educated African elite and Europeans led relating activities, and education enabled them to read imperial speeches and pamphlets as well as newspaper reports. The semi-educated or non-educated part of the society could join in some celebrations, but could not join the management of the associations. Therefore, ceremonies of the British Empire facilitated the close proximity of the educated elite to the colonial authorities and to civilisation, but the “unity” that the Lagos press proclaimed did not encompass all members of Lagos society.

Secondly, self-recognition of the educated elite was not straightforward, such as from Yoruba sub-ethnic group to Pan-Yoruba, then to Nigeria as a nation. Rather, it was more circumstantial. The idea of “West Africa”, “Africa” or “black” had a longer history than Nigeria, and these notions do not appear to have diminished for some time after Nigeria became established as one colony. Nevertheless, examination of newspaper articles on Queen Victoria’s Jubilees illustrated that the awakening of the idea of a

Yoruba nation was promoted by the sense of solidarity within the British Empire.

Thirdly, solidarity in Lagos at the time of the British Empire ceremonies and during WWI, as reported by the Lagos press, was not derived from reality, but was the conscious project of the Lagos press to build their future. As has been discussed in previous chapters, the reason for this would have been that the Lagos press felt obliged to describe and emphasise the importance of the unity of society as the way forward in overcoming the social cleavage and instability of Lagos.

## **CHAPTER 7**

### **CONCLUSION**

#### **7.1. Newspapers as a Tool for the “Construction of Community” in Colonial Lagos**

This study has examined the associational lives of the educated African elite who were described in the Lagos newspapers between 1880 and 1920, focusing especially on articles about memorial associations, industrial and agricultural associations, and associations relating to the ceremonies of the British Empire. The study argues that the descriptions of associational activities in Lagos newspapers were part of a conscious project of the press to re-construct Lagos society by encouraging unity for the progress of society. Political, economic and social issues including associational life were narrated with an emphasis on “unity” for an “African”/“Nigerian” way of progress. This attitude of the Lagos press showed how the self-conscious educated elite attempted to achieve their own form of progress, which differed from European progress, and to share, with the semi-educated and illiterate indigenous people in the community, their visualised forms of civilisation, such as memorial monuments, industrial institutes, and ceremonies relating to the British Empire. In addition to the Black Atlantic influences on the development of the idea of an African way of progress (Zachernuk 1991), this thesis demonstrates the impact of Japan in the intellectual history of Nigeria.

As mentioned in Chapter 1, there are two purposes underlying the study. The first is to re-examine early colonial Lagos, which has been described as a divided society, by focusing on the associational life of the educated elite as reported in the Lagos newspapers. The second is to re-evaluate the roles of the early Lagos press, which had



been treated as an organ exclusively for the African educated elite, focusing on its nationalist attitudes. This section presents the considerations drawn from the previous chapters.

Early colonial Lagos has been described as a stratified and divided society. However, based on extensive examination of the Lagos newspapers, this study advocates attention to a different aspect of Lagos. It reveals the attempts of the educated elite to transcending tensions among different groups and, in some cases, voluntary associations bridged social gaps. But at the same time, voluntary associations often had a role of drawing boundaries between members of the educated elite and the rest of the population.

In the first place, the educated elite endeavoured to share the history with other sections of society by adopting Western modes of memorialisation, while at the same time relating it to their own Yoruba traditions. The activities of commemorative associations can be interpreted as attempts to make a history of their own, and to share this history with illiterate and partly-literate people by giving charismatic figures a visual form, such as portraits and tablets. Memorialisation, namely, the act of recording their “own history”, was described in the Lagos press as the essence of “civilised” society, which the Lagos educated elite aimed at achieving. In addition, the practice of publishing memorial poems shows that memorialisation in the Lagos press became a medium not only for “big men and women” of society, but also for the memorialisation of less prominent individuals, especially females (Chapter 4).

In the second place, the encouragement of industrial and agricultural associations, for the purpose of raising the social standing of artisans and farmers, was an attempt by the Lagos press to improve the standards of artisans and farmers by practical education to make them more productive, eventually overcoming some of the social disparities

considered to have been retarding social progress. The associations and institutions relating to industry and agriculture were reported in relation to the “unity” that the participants felt. Newspaper reports emphasised that Lagos society could regain self-respect and unity as Africans and eventually achieve progress suitable for Lagos society if the educated youths took on agricultural and industrial occupations. Skilled artisans and farmers were idealised as examples of the spirit of independence, no longer valuing the unnecessary mimicry of Western society. Although the educated elite did not question their own positions as leaders of society with cultural privileges over the semi-educated and illiterate mass, the social status of artisans and farmers was assisted, to some extent, by the education project. This can be seen in the descriptions of I. A. Cole, a successful builder, who came to be recognised as a prominent figure in the society (Chapter 5).<sup>339</sup>

Furthermore, the Lagos press emphasised the interactions between the educated, semi-educated and non-educated sections of Lagos society, irrespective of denomination and race, not only in the industrial and agricultural associations (Chapter 5), but also through the ceremonies and related associational activities of the British Empire from the nineteenth century. For instance, Europeans, educated Africans, traditional chiefs, Muslims, as well as Syrians participated in fund raising societies during WWI. What is more, interactions between different sections of the society even took place in a church. In 1914, a special prayer meeting was held at Holy Trinity Church, attended by Christian educated Africans, traditional chiefs and Muslims to discuss the Great War (Chapter 6).

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<sup>339</sup> As we have seen, despite the Lagos press’s encouragement of artisanal and agricultural occupations, the educated elite themselves continued to prefer their children to pursue white-collar occupations. This suggests the contradictory character of the educated elite and shows a distinction between rhetoric and reality.

People in Lagos felt a belonging to various different groups according to the contexts: African, British West African, Nigerian and Yoruba, as well as smaller sub-ethnic groups, such as Ijesha, Egba, Ekiti, Ijebu, Oyo and so on. The meaning of “us” seemed to have changed during the course of time: at first, editors of the Lagos newspapers envisioned “us” as the educated Africans, including those in other parts of British West Africa and sometimes overseas; but later, people in the interior gradually came to be included in “us”, with a gradual diffusion of the concept of “Yoruba” or “Nigerian” identity. However, examinations in this study show how the Lagos press and the educated African elite utilised some associational activities as a model for overcoming social disparity, and also as a way of making use of the political framework of Yorubaland or Nigeria—initially the product of missionaries and the British Government—for the purpose of developing a sense of unity and transcending some of the social cleavages in Lagos.

The early Lagos newspapers comprised a great deal of rhetoric about unity, despite disparities and conflicts in reality. This quest for “unity” for the advancement of the community is a theme that was recurrently discussed by the educated elite in early colonial Lagos, and also continues to appear in historical and ethnographical researches on current associational life in Nigeria, especially those on hometown associations (Trager 2001; Bersselaar 2005).<sup>340</sup>

The second purpose of this research is to re-evaluate the roles of the early Lagos press. The Lagos press is assumed to have served as a media for furnishing information,

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<sup>340</sup> Trager (2001) discusses how Ijesha hometown associations attempted to encourage “unity” among Ijeshas—one of the Yoruba sub-ethnic groups—in a specific town or in the Ijesha communities in general—which was recognised to be strengthened by community-day celebrations, while Bersselaar (2005) investigates how “unity” between Igbo people in the villages and those who lived in the cities or abroad was emphasised through appropriation of the coloniser’s concepts, “progress”, “self-help”, and “development”.

and as an educator of the masses, recorder of local history and culture, and as critic of the Colonial authorities in order to prevent “autocracy and anarchy” (Echeruo 1977; Omu 1978). In addition, the Lagos press served as the maker and media for the values of the time. Ideas on unity, progress, morality, respectability, the educated elite’s sense of mission to the illiterate section of the society; and the rehabilitation of traditional customs, religions and ethnic identities were formulated and disseminated through newspapers. As shown in Chapter 6, the press played an essential role in popularising the terms “Yoruba” and “Nigeria”; which is the way the readers came to know themselves as such.

This research also shows that the Lagos press served as a tool and strategy for the construction of the community: Lagos/Yoruba/Nigeria, and occasionally Africa. Memorial associations emphasised their connection with “Yoruba” tradition when they proclaimed the necessity for memorialisation of important figures in early Lagos (Chapter 4). The newspaper articles on industry and agricultural associations repeated the importance of those associations in connection with the “natural” development of “Africa”, because blue collar occupations were recognised as suitable for the character of “Africans” (Chapter 5). Chapter 6, in particular, shows how the envisioned unity of the British Empire provided the Lagos educated elite with both inspiration and an ideological base for the notion of the “oneness of Yoruba” (through Queen Victoria’s Jubilee ceremonies), and later a “United Nigeria” (through Empire Day ceremonies and fund-raising societies during WWI), with which the Lagos press attempted to encourage social cohesion and the economic improvement of society.

Although the Lagos press provided the educated elite with a forum for debating issues of concern—such as the colonial situation in which they found themselves—it was not the mouthpiece of the educated elite, but it reflected the changing needs of the

readers, referring to issues on the semi-educated youths, artisans, farmers and less-educated indigenous people. The Lagos press had a high sense of mission as the representative of “civilised” Lagosians and educator of the people, with the purpose of leading society on the African way of “progress”. Through the self-representation of unity and the “African” way of progress, the Lagos press attempted to construct the ideal community of the future.

## **7.2. Limitations of the Present Study and Suggestions for Future Research**

The object of this study is not to illustrate the whole reality of associational life in Lagos society, but to examine, in an historical context, what was described and represented in the Lagos newspapers, namely, what the educated elite in Lagos hoped to record in text. Consequently, the methodology and scope of this research would be open to criticism. Firstly, although this research focuses on vocabularies used to describe the associational life of the educated elite, it does not apply the methodology of discourse analytical research based on literary theory and social theory, notably that of Michael Foucault, which enables detailed analysis of newspaper text. Secondly, the fact that the research mostly relies on newspapers and some supplementary private papers as a source makes it insufficient as a social history of Lagos newspapers. Thirdly, although this research argues that the Lagos press tried to describe interactions between different groups in the society through associational activities, it focuses mainly on the educated *Saro* elite who served as editors and contributors of the early Lagos newspapers, and does not extensively cover other sections of society, such as prominent Muslim or Brazilians in Lagos (Baker 1974; Cole 1975; Law 2004). Despite limitations in its scope and experimental aspects, this thesis seeks to contribute to an understanding of the

social lives of the educated African elite and of press activity in early colonial Lagos.

The findings of this research provide the following insights for future research: Firstly, research with longer periodisation is one option for future research. This research has traced the construction of “Yoruba” consciousness in the early colonial period in Chapter 6, but it would be worth carrying out a more diachronic study of Yoruba ethnogenesis in the Lagos newspapers covering the 1880s to 1930s.<sup>341</sup> In addition, the examination of associational lives, as reported in the Lagos newspaper from the 1920s to the 1930s, would provide more diachronic perspectives on the social lives of the educated elite.

Secondly, the more extensive examination of other imperial visitors from Nigeria to Britain is another theme for investigation. As mentioned in Chapter 6, “Britons who travelled through colonial places, reporting their observations and impressions” have attracted the attention of researchers (Lambert and Lester 2006, 1). The presence of West Africans in Britain in the twentieth century has been studied, focusing especially on interactions between African students and African American intellectuals, which resulted in the pan-African and nationalist movements.<sup>342</sup> However, much less has been researched on the encounters of Nigerians with the imperial metropolis, especially those who travelled to Britain. This thesis deals with the travels of John Otonba Payne to Brazil, England and Paris in 1886 (Chapter 6), but it would be interesting to examine other imperial visitors from Nigeria to Britain, such as the Alake (king) of Abeokuta in 1904 and the Land Tenure Deputation in 1913.

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<sup>341</sup> Omu (1978) argues that the periodisation of 1880-1937 is one analytical framework for the research on Nigerian press because of the change in political history in Nigeria in 1938 when the Nigerian National Democratic party lost to the Nigerian Youth Movement. Therefore, it is worth carrying out newspaper research applying Omu’s periodisation.

<sup>342</sup> The African presence in Britain has been studied since the 1970s. See for instance, Killingray (1994) and Adi (1998).

In Edwardian England, the Colonial Office and various individuals such as members of missionary societies and merchants invited guests from British colonies in Africa to their country. They “arranged tours and meetings” and showed the guests “industrial and social activities, and thus enlarged their understanding of the British and Britons’ awareness of the people of the tropical empire”. The Alake of Abeokuta, *Gbabode* was one example of the visitors from the British colonies (Green 1998, 15).<sup>343</sup> Another noticeable example of an imperial visitor was the Land Tenure Deputation, a group of Nigerian chiefs who visited the Anti-Slavery and Aborigine Protection Society in London, in June 1913, in order to appeal for the protection of land rights of the indigenous people.<sup>344</sup> Comparative research on the descriptions of their travels, as reported in Nigerian newspapers and British newspapers, would contribute to the understanding of differences and similarities in perspectives on Nigerians’ colonial encounters.

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<sup>343</sup> The Alake’s visit attracted huge attention in Britain, and his encounter with British “civilisation” was reported in detail by the British and Lagos press (Inose 2002). Even a parody of the Alake’s visit to England can be found in Episode 12, Cyclops, of James Joyce’s, *Ulysses* (1922) — a novel dealing with the events of one day in Dublin, 16 June 1904. Chapter 12 of *Ulysses* is located at a pub, and the parodies of various events in newspapers in 1904 were discussed. The Alake’s passage is in a paragraph which the Citizen — the principal speaker in Cyclops — reads from a newspaper entitled the *United Irishman* “about the Zulu chief that’s visiting England” called “Alaki [sic] of Yoruba section in south western Nigeria, and describes a visit of “Alaki [sic] of Abeakuta [sic]”, treating him as an object of fun and mockery.

<sup>344</sup> As mentioned in footnote 311 of Chapter 6, land tenure policy was proposed in 1912, for the purpose of allowing the Colonial Government to serve as trustee of African lands, vesting in the Governor the power to distribute lands. For more on the Land right protests 1912-1913, see chapter 3 of Okonkwo (1995).

## APPENDICES

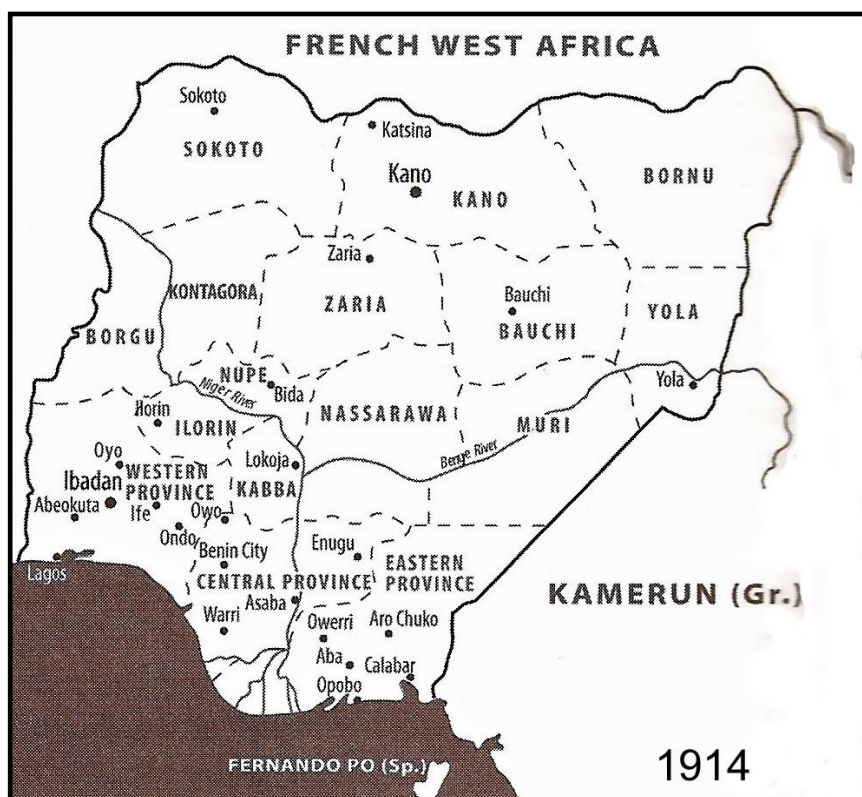
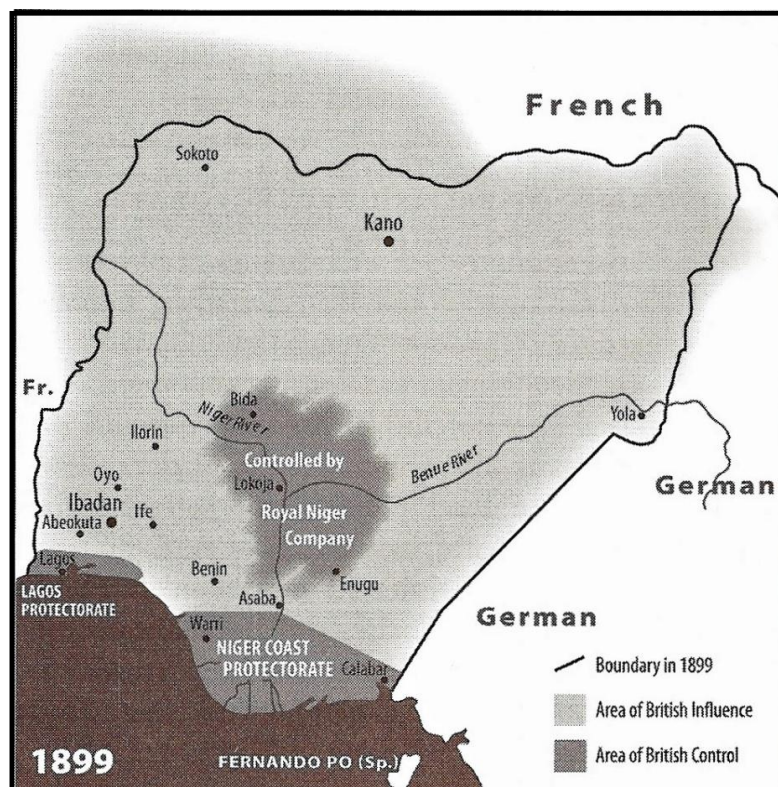
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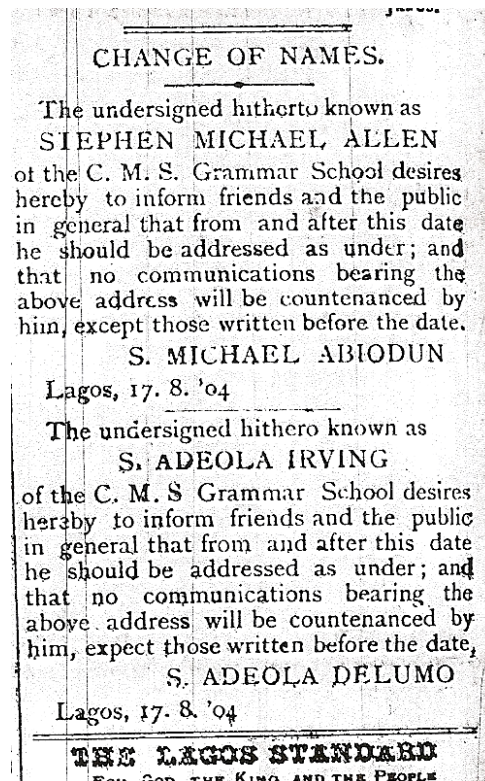
## Appendix 1: Map of the British Colonial Nigeria



(Falola and Heaton 2008, 94, modified by author)

## Appendix 2: Examples of Notices and Advertisements in the Lagos Newspapers

Plate 2-1: Notice Inserted in the *Lagos Standard* on Change of Name



(LS, 17 August 1904)


Plate 2-2: Advertisements of Painkiller for Cholera and “Abbey’s Salt” for Headache, Constipation, Indigestion and Biliousness

**Keep it Handy**  
when accidents or sudden sickness  
come, nothing acts so promptly as

**Painkiller**  
(PENNY DAVIES)

**Invaluable for Cholera, Cramps,  
etc.**

The Rev. J. E. Tracey, of the American Madura Mission, Periakulan, Madura District, South India, writes: “Mrs. Tracey and myself have been long and well acquainted with your Painkiller and have used it to great advantage in hundreds of cases. It is a most excellent medicine for Bowel Complaints, including Dysentery, Cholera, Colic, Cramps and disturbances of that character. Applied externally for Stings of Insects, Sprains and Wounds it is most beneficial.”



“THE SALT OF SALTS”

**Abbey’s**

**Effer-  
vescent Salt**

You will be thankful when you become acquainted with Abbey’s Salt, for you will find it pleasant and effective.

Abbey’s Salt conquers headache, constipation, indigestion, biliousness, and all troubles that come from a disordered condition of the stomach, liver and bowels.

When you do become acquainted with Abbey’s Salt, you will probably be sorry you did not know about it sooner.

Sold by all Chemists and Stores,  
Rev. Fruit Saline Co., Ltd.,  
Victoria Street, London, E.C.

(LWR, 17 November 1906)



Plate 2-3: Advertisements of Tonic Wine for Anemia, Chlorosis, Debility, and Neurasthenia



(Left: LS 11 November 1908, Right: LS 11 April 1906)

### Appendix 3: The Numbers of Articles with the Terms “Elite”, “Educated Native”, “Civilised/Civilized Native” and “Educated Elite” in the *Lagos Standard* 1907-1920

	Numbers of Articles in the <i>Lagos Standard</i> (1907- 1920)
Educated Native	65 [167 Results]
Elite	17
Civilised/Civilized Native	6 [78 Results] <sup>345</sup>
Educated Elite	0

(Source: World Newspaper Archive, African Newspapers Collection. Contents analysis carried out by the author)

<sup>345</sup> 78 items hit when I searched for the word “civilised/civilized native” using word search function of the database. However, it detected “civilised” and “native” not always as one phrase but often separately in different sentences. I went through all the detected articles, and it was found out only 5 of them actually included the phrase “civilized native”.

## Appendix 4: Average Rate of Wages for Labour between 1884 and 1912

Table 4-1: Average Rate of Wages for Labour in 1884

Trade	Per annum	Per day
Praedial—all field labourers and gardeners are generally hired by the month, if paid by day they get higher wages	£ 12 - £ 18	1s - 1s 6d
Domestic—Servants are all engaged monthly	£ 12 - £ 36	
Traders—Builders, Carpenters and Masons Printers Blacksmiths Tailors and Shoemakers Painters	—	4s 6d - 7s 6d 2s - 4s 6d 1s 6d - 4s 6d 2s 6d - 4s 6d 1s 6d - 3s 2s - 3s 6d

(Lagos Blue Book 1884, 95)

Table 4-2: Average Rate of Wages for Labour in 1892

Trade	Per annum	Per day
Praedial—all field labourers and gardeners are generally hired by the month, if paid by day they get higher wages	£ 9 - £ 18	1s - 1s 6d
Domestic—Servants are all engaged monthly	£ 9 - £36	
Traders—Builders, Carpenters and Masons Printers Blacksmiths Tailors and Shoemakers Painters Coopers	£46 - £78  £36 - £60	4s 6d - 7s 6d 1s 6d - 4s 6d 1s 6d - 3s 6d 1s 6d - 4s 6d 1s 6d - 3s 1s 6d - 3s 6d 1s 6d - 3s

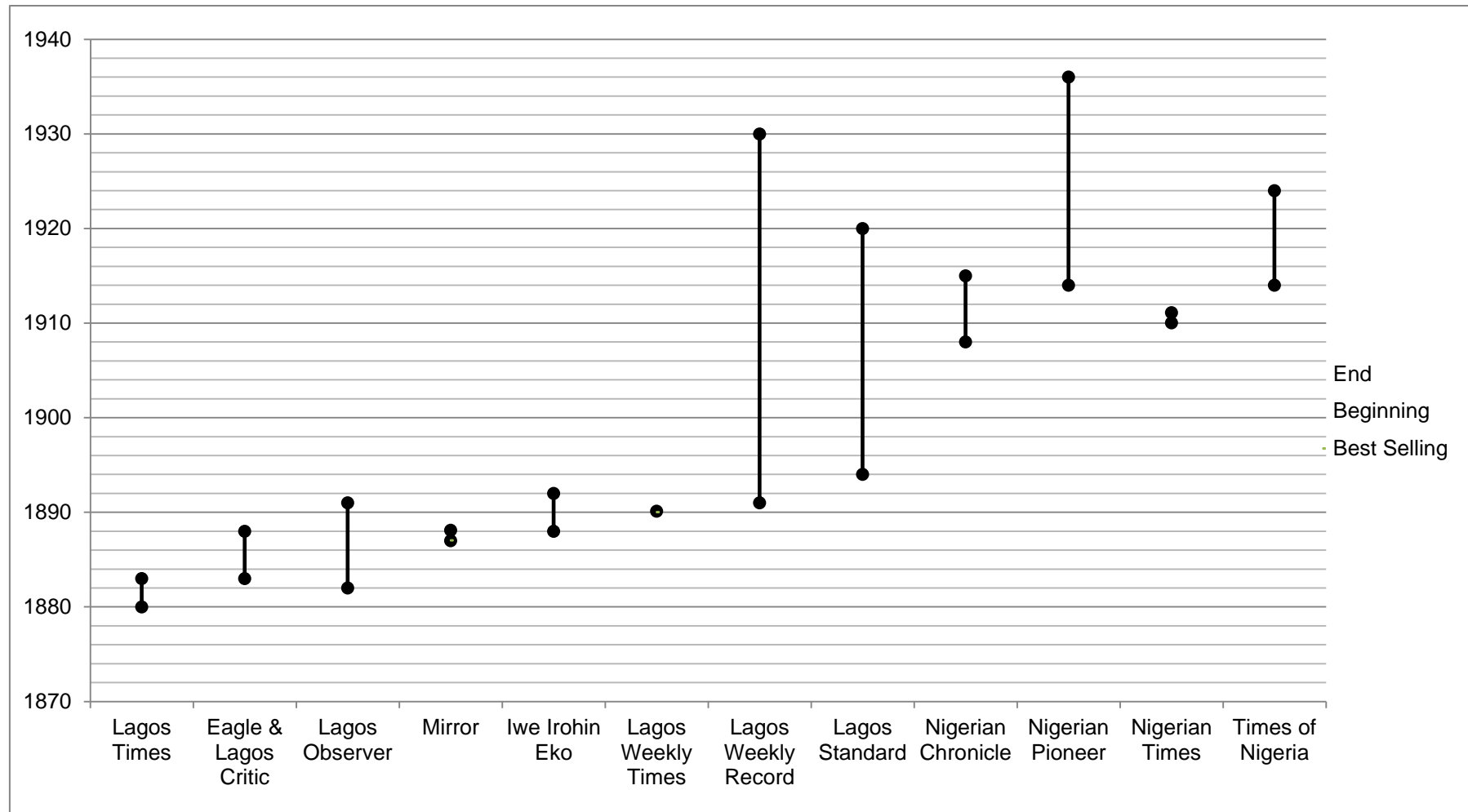
(Lagos Blue Book 1892, 91)

Table 4-3: Average Rate of Wages for Labours in Southern Nigeria 1912

Trade	Rate of Wage (per annum, £ )	Rate of Wages (per day)
Carpenters and Joiners	36-66	2s 6d - 5s
Bricklayers and Masons	36-48	2s - 3s
Smiths	48-72	3s - 5s
Coopers	42-48	1s 6d - 4s
Painters		2s - 3s
Native Foremen	90-192	
Engine Drivers	36-150	2s 6d - 5s
Artificers (Engine Fitters)	36-102	2s - 5s
Moulders	54-72	
Boilermakers	36-72	2s - 4s 6d
Tailors	35-90	2s 9d
Sailmakers	24-60	
Firemen and Greasers	18-48	
Labourers and Carriers		6d - 1s

(Blue Book Colony of Southern Nigeria 1912, Y2)

## Appendix 5: The Life-Span of Selected Lagos Newspapers



(Omu 1978, 252-253)

**Appendix 6: Circulations (per month/ fortnight/week) of Selected Lagos Newspapers**

Title		<i>Lagos Times &amp; Gold Coast Colony Advertiser</i>	<i>Eagle and Lagos Critic</i>	<i>Lagos Observer</i>	<i>Iwe Irohin Eko</i>	<i>Lagos Weekly Record</i>	<i>Lagos Standard</i>	<i>Nigerian Chronicle</i>	<i>Nigerian Pioneer</i>	<i>Nigerian Times</i>	<i>Times of Nigeria</i>
Duration Frequency		1880-83 fortnightly 1890-91 weekly	1883-88 monthly	1882-90 fortnightly	1888-92 fortnightly	1891-1930 weekly	1894-1917; 1918-20 weekly	1908-15 weekly	1914-36 weekly	1910-11 weekly	1914-15, 1917-24 weekly
	1881	250									
	1882	250		360							
	1883	250	200	480							
	1884		196	480							
	1885		200	480							
	1886		200	480							
	1887		140	100							
	1888		110	270							
	1889			277	256						
	1890			×	256						
	1891				192	278					
	1892					278					
	1893					278					
	1894					278					
	1895					496	300				
	1896					600	519				
	1897					600	519				
	1898					500	519				
	1899					500	519				

	1900					577	577				
	1901					500	519				
	1902					500	519				
	1903					500	500				
	1904					500	500				
	1905					500	500				
	1906					500	1000				
	1907					500	1050				
	1908					500	1000	400			
	1909					500	500	450			
	1910					500	500	450		400	
	1911					700	580	580		400	
	1912					700	700	600			
	1913 -191 9					-	-	-			
	1920								500		230
	1921								500		1000
	1922								500		1000
	1923					2000			500		700

(Source: *Blue Book of Lagos* 1881-1906; *Blue Book of Southern Nigeria* 1906-1923. The table made by the author)



## Appendix 7: Annual Circulations of Selected Lagos Newspapers

Title		<i>Lagos Times &amp; Gold Coast Colony Advertiser</i>	<i>Eagle and Lagos Critic</i>	<i>Lagos Observer</i>	<i>Iwe Irohin Eko</i>	<i>Lagos Weekly Record</i>	<i>Lagos Standard</i>	<i>Nigerian Chronicle</i>	<i>Nigerian Pioneer</i>	<i>Nigerian Times</i>	<i>Times of Nigeria</i>
Duration Frequency		1880-83 fortnightly 1890-91 weekly	1883-88 monthly	1882-90 fortnightly	1888-92 fortnightly	1891-1930 weekly	1894-1917; 1918-20 weekly	1908-15 weekly	1914-36 weekly	1910-11 weekly	1914-15, 1917-24 weekly
	1881	6500									
	1882	6500		9360							
	1883	6500	2400	12480							
	1884		2352	12480							
	1885		2400	12480							
	1886		2400	12480							
	1887		1680	4608							
	1888		1320	7020							
	1889			7200	6650						
	1890			×	6650						
	1891				5000	14440					
	1892					14440					
	1893					14440					
	1894					14440	7500				
	1895					25800	15600				
	1896					31200	27000				
	1897					31200	27000				
	1898					26000	27000				

	1899					26000	27000				
	1900					30000	30000				
	1901					26000	27000				
	1902					26000	27000				
	1903					26000	26000				
	1904					26000	26000				
	1905					26000	26000				
	1906					26000	52000				
	1907					26000	54600				
	1908					26000	52000	20800			
	1909					26000	26000	23400			
	1910					26000	26000	23400		20800	
	1911					36400	30160	30160		20800	
	1912					36400	36400	31200			
	1913 -1919					-	-	-			
	1920								26000		11960
	1921								26000		52000
	1922								26000		52000
	1923					104000			26000		36400

(Source: *Blue Book of Lagos* 1881-1906; *Blue Book of Southern Nigeria* 1906-1923. The table made by the author)

## Appendix 8: Regulations of Some Associations in Nineteenth Century Lagos

Plate 8-1: Regulation of the Lagos Church of England School Society

- THE LAGOS CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
SCHOOL SOCIETY.
- The object of this Society is to promote the education of the poorer classes in the Settlement of Lagos in connection with the Church of England in Lagos.
- This object is sought to be attained,
1. By making Grants-in-aid to Schools, on the principle of payments for results obtained by inspection of the Schools.
  2. By making Grants towards the building, re-building, and repairs of School-houses and Teachers' residences.
  3. By giving pecuniary assistance to the managers of Schools needing it: towards
    - (1) The payment of Teachers' Salaries;
    - (2) Providing School Furniture and Material.
  4. By seeking (if thought to be desirable) to stimulate Teachers and Scholars by the distribution of rewards.
- Its constitution is as follows:—
1. His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor of the Settlement for the time being is Patron, if he be pleased to accept the office.
  2. The Right Rev. the Bishop of the Diocese for the time being is President.
  3. All donors of £25 or upwards; or of £10 accompanied by an annual Subscription of £5 or upwards, are Vice-Presidents.
  4. All donors of £5, or subscribers of ten shillings (or, in case of clergymen, of five shillings), are members; and also all Pastors of congregations presenting an annual congregational collection of £2 or upwards.
  5. The management of the affairs of the Society is confided to a central Board, which consists of the Principals of the Church Missionary Society's Training Institution and Grammar school, of all Ministers and Pastors, being Local Managers of any Schools assisted by the Board; of one communicant Lay member from such Church, being a subscriber to the general School fund, and nominated by the Church; and also of two laymen, not necessarily Communicants, one of whom shall be chosen by the Church Council, and the other by the Church Committee. The nomination of the lay members of the Board is for two years, and takes place at the period of Easter; but vacancies caused by resignation, removal, or death, may be filled up at any time.
  6. The presence of five members, at least, is required to constitute a meeting of the Board.
  7. The Board appoints its own Officers.

(Payne 1877, 42)

## Plate 8-2: Rules and Regulations of the Lagos Town library Club

### RULES AND REGULATIONS OF THE LAGOS TOWN LIBRARY CLUB.

The Lagos Town Library Club is instituted for the purpose of establishing and maintaining a library of books, maps, &c., for reference; a reading-room to be supplied with the leading English journals and other periodicals; and for providing a selection of works of history, biography, travel, fiction, &c., to be lent out to the members, under such rules and conditions as may be approved by the committee.

I. That the members shall consist of all persons who shall be approved of and elected by a majority of the committee.

II. That the Administrator for the time being of Lagos shall be eligible to become an honorary member; and that the committee shall have the power to invite any foreigner of distinction, or any naval or military officer temporarily visiting Lagos, to be an honorary visitor during such visit.

III. Any member who shall be convicted of any criminal offence, or shall be officially declared a bankrupt or outlaw, shall *ipso facto* cease to be a member; and shall not be eligible for re-election, unless with the consent of at least two-thirds of the committee.

IV. In case the conduct of any member either in or out of the Club-house shall, in the opinion of the committee, be injurious to the character and interest of the Club, the committee shall be empowered to recommend such member to resign; and if such member shall not within fourteen days resign, the committee shall then call a general meeting of the members, and if a majority of two-thirds of such meeting agree to the expulsion of such member, he shall cease to be a member, and shall be ineligible for re-election: Provided that if two-thirds of the committee are of opinion that the offence of a member warrants his immediate expulsion, they shall be empowered to suspend such member from the use and advantage of the Club, which suspension shall be final; unless at the next general meeting such decision shall be reversed.

V. Candidates must be proposed by one member, and seconded by another; the candidate's name, occupation, and residence, together with the names of the proposer and seconder, shall be posted up in a conspicuous place in the reading-room, seven days at least before the day of his election. The proposer and seconder are held responsible for the eligibility of any candidate.

VI. The annual subscription of members shall be one guinea, payable in advance, on the first day of January in each year.

VII. Every new member shall pay his subscription to the Treasurer, on receiving notice of his election, and before he shall be allowed any benefit of the Club; if such subscription shall not be paid within fourteen days, his name shall be erased from the list of members.

VIII. The name of every member failing to pay his annual subscription due on the first day of January shall, after fourteen days, be placed in the reading-room; and if such subscription shall not be paid within one month, if the defaulter shall have been any part of such time in Lagos, or within fourteen days of his return, if he shall have been absent therefrom, he shall cease to be a member.

IX. Any member who shall cease to belong to the Club, by resignation, or otherwise, shall have no claim on, or be entitled to participate in any of the effects or property of the Club, nor to have any part of his current subscription for the year returned.

X. There shall be five trustees, in whose names all the property of the Club shall be held, subject nevertheless to the disposition of the committee; and their order in writing, signed by the Chairman, with two other members, shall be obligatory upon, and full authority for the trustees; and if any trustee declines to act, or is rendered ineligible as a

trustee, by absenting himself for more than seven months from Lagos, or otherwise, he shall be replaced by another, to be named by the committee, such nomination to be subject to the approval of the next general meeting.

XI. Two of the officers shall be officers of the Lagos Government; two shall be native merchants; one shall be a British merchant or agent.

XII. The committee shall consist of nine members, who shall be chosen, as far as possible, thus: Two from the officers of the Government of Lagos, two from the British merchants or agents, three from the native merchants, two from the missionaries or clergy. The committee shall be elected at the annual general meeting, and each of them shall, unless he resign or become incapable, or unwilling to perform the duties, retain his appointment until the termination of the next annual general meeting, and may be re-elected. Notice of such general annual meeting shall be posted in a conspicuous place in the reading-room fourteen days before the day appointed for such annual general meeting. The committee shall choose one of their number as chairman.

XIII. The committee shall hold a general meeting of the members when requested so to do by ten members, and at such meeting the majority of members present shall decide. The committee shall also hold an ordinary meeting once a month, or oftener as required, for the admission of members and to transact current business. Three shall form a quorum. The days appointed for a general and ordinary meeting shall be posted in a conspicuous place in the reading-room—fourteen days previously for a general meeting, two days previously for an ordinary meeting.

XIV. All the arrangements and regulations (not otherwise provided for), for the establishment and management of the Club, shall be conducted by the committee.

XV. Any vacancies occasioned by death or resignation of trustee, treasurer, or librarian, to be filled up by the committee when not less than five members are present, subject to the approval of the next general meeting.

XVI. A report and abstract of the accounts and concerns of the Club, up to the thirty-first day of December previous, signed by the chairman and treasurer, shall be submitted to the annual general meeting.

XVII. There shall be an annual general meeting of the members held on or about the fifteenth day of January, of which fourteen days' notice shall be duly posted in the reading-room, for the purpose of receiving from the committee, a report of general concerns of the Club, to elect members of the committee, and discussing all proposals which may require the approval or decision of a general meeting; a majority of the members present at such meeting shall decide. One of the trustees or a member of the committee shall preside at all annual general meetings.

XVIII. No subject which does not relate to the management of the concerns of the Club shall be proposed or brought forward for discussion at any meeting of its members.

XIX. No game of hazard or cards shall be on any account played in the Club; no member shall take a dog into the house; and no smoking shall be allowed, unless specially sanctioned by the committee.

XX. These rules and regulations shall be printed, and a copy of them, together with a list of the committee and members, shall be delivered to every member, or transmitted to his address, but no member shall be absolved from the effect of these rules on any allegation of not having received them.

XXI. As the payment of the subscription according to the regulations will entitle the member to every benefit and privilege of the Club, such payment shall be his distinct acknowledgment of, and acquiescence in the rules and regulations of the Club.

(Payne 1878, 47-48)

Plate 8-3: Members of the Hoope Race Club, the Lagos Batchelors' Cricket Club and the Lagos Races

hs	MERRY-GO-ROUND COMPANY.	
tr,	<i>Secretary.</i> —W. E. Cole.	
de	The novel and merry-go-round was introduced in 1875 to	
as	the public. It is open to riders on holidays at the race-	
il	course, and at other times in Tinubu square.	
	Fee for riding, from 6d. to 2s.	
io	HOOP RACE CLUB.	
ie	<i>President.</i> —John A. Payne.	
ih	<i>Secretary.</i> —Augustus Bright.	
o	FOR CONCERT AND EVENING ENTERTAIN-	
de	MENT.	
n	Members of the LAGOS "ESPRIT DE CORPS," at the	
l-	West end of Tinubu square.	
il	<i>Patron.</i> —His Excellency the Administrator.	
d	<i>President.</i> —John A. Payne.	
g	<i>Stage Manager.</i> —S. Albert John.	
f-	<i>Secretary.</i> —	
h	<i>Musical Director.</i> —John S. T. Davies.	
ie		
	W. R. Harding.	W. Reffle.
of	B. J. Gilpin.	W. H. Bennett.
i,	E. T. Scott.	C. Porter.
it	Thos. J. Cole.	James Cole.
y	J. T. Leigh.	G. A. Williams.
-	T. B. Duncan.	C. M. Davies.
s.	THE LAGOS BATCHELORS' CRICKET CLUB.	
-	Under the Patronage of	
n	JOHN AUGUSTUS PAYNE, Esq., &c., &c.	
-	<i>Umpire for the Red.</i> —W. E. Cole, Esq.	
-	<i>Umpire for the Blue.</i> —D. Williams, Esq.	
-	<i>Manager.</i> —R. S. Williams.	
-	MEMBERS—RED.	MEMBERS—BLUE.
-	S. B. Williams.	E. J. Williams.
n	Z. C. Roberts.	G. R. Cummings.
e	R. A. Wey.	T. D. Johnson.
o	J. O. W. Decker.	J. L. Williams.
-	W. S. George.	T. B. Duncan.
-	R. S. Williams.	H. W. Scale.
r	H. A. Brown.	D. T. Coker.
e	D. T. Pearce.	M. D. Elliot.
-	E. T. Goyer.	J. J. Johnson.
-	Q. F. Gomez.	T. T. Adams.
-		L. Phillips.
-		J. S. T. Davies.
-		C. M. Davies.
t	When two of any side bat, two of the other side bowl.	
s	When one of any side is out, the two actors are out,	
l	and their places refilled by another two.	
t	Highest run to be obtained is one hundred.	
-	HALDANE W. SCALE, Honorary Secretary.	
-	Lagos, December 25, 1873.	
	THE LAGOS RACES	
	take place between the months of October and December,	
	under the patronage of His Excellency the Administrator.	
	<i>Stewards.</i>	<i>Starter.</i>
	Frank Simpson, Esq.	John A. Payne, Esq.
	C. W. Heldbek, Esq.	<i>Committee.</i>
	Settimio Carrena, Esq.	Chas. D. Turton, Esq.,
	J. P. L. Davies, Esq.	Chairman.
	Chas. Foresythe, Esq.	His Honour Jas. Marshall.
	Wm. Meyer, Esq.	R. K. Bousfield, Esq.
	<i>Judge.</i>	Robt. Campbell, Esq.
	Frank Simpson, Esq.	Chas. J. George, Esq.
	<i>Clerk of Scales.</i>	Capt. T. J. Whittington.
	F. Hoyd, Esq.	<i>Treasurer.</i>
		Charles Pike, Esq.
	PROGRAMME.	
	FIRST DAY.—First race.—The "Trial Stakes," once	
	round and a distance, for all horses not exceeding 13	
	hands high, catch weights. Entrance fee, 10s. First	
	horse, £4 4s.; second, £1 1s.	

(Payne 1878, 48)

Plate 8-4: Regulations and Members of the Lagos Gymnastic Club and the Lagos Scientific Society

	<b>THE LAGOS GYMNASTIC CLUB.</b>	
ice	The Lagos Gymnastic Club, established 8th April, 1876,	
ee,	was granted the free use of the spare ground in rear of the	
re.	Treasury, by His Excellency C. C. Lees, to be occupied at	
	the option of the Administrator of the Settlement.	
ir	<i>President.</i> —R. G. Milne.	
he	<i>Secretary.</i> —A. C. Campbell.	
ee.	<i>Committee of Management.</i> —A. Léon, P. Manning, J. G.	
	Callerholm, J. A. Ribeiro.	
ss.	The members and subscribers consist of the following	
ar	gentlemen;—His Excellency C. C. Lees, the Hon. Judge	
	Marshall, Capt. H. H. Graves, L. Heldbeck, R. Campbell,	
or	C. Pike, John Smith, C. Hannemann, W. Meyer, E.	
	Lemche, C. Branne, J. G. Callerholm, L. Wienefeld, A.	
"	Ball, W. W. Lewis, A. Léon, W. R. Krenner, W. G.	
ne	Milne, C. Mullins, A. Elliott, J. G. da Silva, P. Manning,	
	R. K. Bousfield, A. H. Porter, S. Carena, C. J. George, J.	
id	S. Leigh, G. M. Van de Poel, A. C. Campbell.	
	The following are the principal apparatus on the	
	ground:—	
	Parallel Bars	Horizontal Ladder
	Horizontal Bar	Climbing Poles
	Vaulting Horse	Climbing Rope
.)	High Jumping Gauge	Ladder, Trapeze, &c.
	Candidates are first proposed by a member and then	
	elected by ballot.	
	Subscription 2s. 6d. monthly, with an entrance fee	
	of 21s.	
	A. C. CAMPBELL, Secretary.	
	<b>LAGOS SCIENTIFIC SOCIETY.</b>	
ss.	<i>Patron.</i> —His Excellency the Administrator.	
	<i>President.</i> —Robert Campbell.	
ts.	<i>Chairman Finance Committee.</i> —J. M. Blair.	
	<i>Treasurer.</i> —J. J. Williams.	
rs.	<i>Secretary.</i> —W. E. Cole.	
	SIR,—I beg to inform you of the formation of a society	
ts.	with the above designation, for the promotion of the study	
	of Science among Young Men of this place.	
	The Society respectfully solicits your support, and	
h	requests that you will kindly permit your name to be	
	placed on its list as a Subscribing Member. Subscribers	
;	will have the privilege of attending the weekly meetings of	
	the Society, and joining in the discussions, and they will	
e	be permitted to attend the Public Lectures without further	
	expense.—I have the honour to be, Sir, Your obedient	
;	Servant, W. E. COLE, Secretary.	
	N.B.—Meetings are held every Friday at 7.30 o'clock, in	
;	one of the Class Rooms of the C.M.S. High School,	
	Broad Street.	
;	<i>Members.</i> —Rev. C. Phillips; Messrs R. A. Coker, M.	
	T. John, D. O. Williams, E. E. Collins, E. Henley, J.	
;	Olunole, W. P. Richards, J. A. Byass, A. W. Campbell,	
	A. C. Campbell, J. L. Baptist, J. E. Baptist.	
;	<i>Honorary Members.</i> —His Honour Judge Marshall, J.	
	A. Payne, Esq.; Revs. J. A. Maser, J. B. Wood, A.	
;	Mann, J. Milner, J. Johnson, W. J. David, V. Faulkner,	
;	W. Morgan.	

(Payne 1878, 49)

Plate 8-5: Lists of Members of the Freemason Lodge No. 1711., the Court Fount of Hope NO. 7789 of the Ancient Order of Foresters Friendly Society, the Lagos Orphean Club and the Lagos Race and Regatta

# SPORTS AND PASTIMES.

## FREEMASONS' LODGE, No. 1,171. BAMGBOSE STREET, LAGOS.

*Past Masters*—Brothers R. Campbell; Surgeon-Major Frank Simpson, M.D.; G. Hutchinson; C. D. Turton; Charles Pike; Charles Foresythe; A. J. Rodrigues; C. J. George; J. A. O. Payne; J. S. Bucknor; A. C. Campbell; and C. Ungebauer.  
*Worshipful Master*—Brother C. A. S. Williams.  
*Senior Warden*—Brother E. R. Davison.  
*Junior do.*—Brother F. G. Osborne.  
*Chaplain*—Brother Rev. B. W. Euba.  
*Treasurer*—Brother T. A. King.  
*Secretary*—Brother R. A. Wright.  
*Senior Deacon*—Brother H. B. M. Griffith.  
*Junior do.*—Brother A. Pratt.  
*Inner Guard*—Brother B. Dawodu.  
*Director of Ceremonies*—Brother J. B. Benjamin.  
*Stewards*—Brother F. C. Green, and Brother G. A. Williams.  
*Tyler*—Brother J. F. Byass.

## COURT FOUNT OF HOPE, No. 7,789, OF THE ANCIENT ORDER OF FORESTERS FRIENDLY SOCIETY.

BALBINA STREET, LAGOS.

Officers and Committee of Management:—

*Worthy Chief Ranger*—J. A. Otonba Payne.  
*S.C.R.*—M. W. Davies.  
*Treasurer*—A. S. Cole. *Secretary*—S. M. Reffell.  
*Assistant Secretary*—E. A. T. A. Johnson.  
*S.W.*—J. B. Holloway. *J.W.*—J. W. Vaughan.  
*S.B.*—J. R. Shann. *J.B.*—Joseph Leigh, jun.  
*Auditors*—

P. J. Martins.	N. W. Holm.
G. K. Gomes.	S. A. Wright.
J. Dawodu.	C. A. Foresythe.
E. T. Green.	S. G. Williams.
E. S. D. Coker.	J. H. Samuel.
D. J. Martins.	S. A. Puddicomb.
B. C. Vaughan.	J. H. S. Robbin.

*Trustees*.—J. A. Otonba Payne, James Lewis.

## LAGOS ORPHEAN CLUB.

INSTITUTED 1891.

R. A. Coker (President), R. A. Wright (Patron and Treasurer), S. A. Wright (Secretary), F. G. Martins (Financial Secretary), G. Meadows (Assistant Secretary), C. A. Foresythe, R. A. Macarthy, C. E. T. Cutlack, J. H. S. Robbin, J. da Costa, J. Leigh, junr., J. Dawodu, S. A. Jibowu, E. A. T. Johnson, A. W. Howells, E. S. Coker, J. A. King, E. S. Willoughby, R. Williams, R. F. Coker, F. R. Foresythe, J. Thompson, J. H. G. Willoughby, J. Leigh, T. Williams, S. W. Dalley, T. Wright.



## THE LAGOS RACES AND REGATTA.

(Under the Patronage of His Excellency the Governor.)

Committee.

The Hon. C. J. George.	G. Ahrens, Esq.
„ Thomas Welsh.	J. K. Hutton, Esq.
G. W. Neville, Esq.	C. A. Williams, Esq.
J. A. Otonba Payne, Esq.	Captain Tarbett.
A. B. Buttrick, Esq.	E. R. Davison, Esq.
F. E. Osborne, Esq.	

*Secretary*.—F. E. Osborne.

(Payne 1893, 74)

## Appendix 9: Governor's "At Home" in 1888, Tennis Match



(CMS Album, Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan)



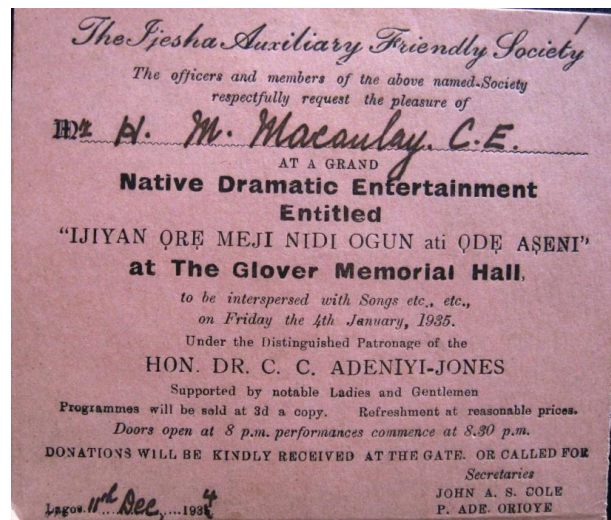
## Appendix 10: Photographs and Pamphlets of the Glover Memorial Hall

Plate 10-1: The Glover Memorial Hall in the Early Twentieth Century



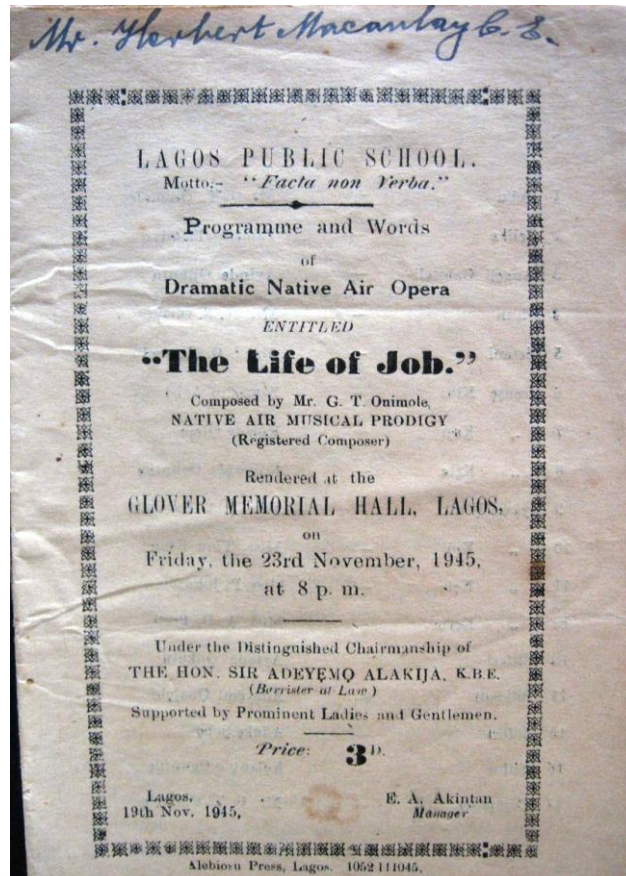
(CMS Album [H.P. 85], Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan)

Plate 10-2: Invitation Card for the Native Dramatic Entertainment at Glover Memorial Hall, to H. M. Macaulay by the Ijesha Auxiliary Friendly Society, 11 Dec 1934



(Source: Box 103, Herbert Macaulay Papers, Ibadan University Library Special Collection, Nigeria)

Plate 10-3: Programme of Dramatic Native Air Opera at Glover Memorial Hall on 23 November 1945



(Source: Box 80, Herbert Macaulay Papers, Ibadan University Library Special Collection, Nigeria)



Plate 10-4: Pamphlet of Glover Memorial Hall (Collected by author in 2007)

#### FACILITIES INCLUDE

- Uninterrupted Power Supply
- Flawless Air-conditioning
- Superb Stage Lighting
- Up-to-date Sound/Public Address System
- Efficient Technical Back-up

#### OTHER SERVICES

- Hall Decorations
- Cooling Equipment for drinks

#### HALL RATE

- ₦95,000 -- (₦5,000.00 refundable)
- +5% VAT - ₦104,750.00

#### EXHIBITION FOYER

- Capacity: 24 - 36 person
- Rate: ₦45,000.00

*Rates are subject to change as situation demands*

All enquiries to:  
**ADMINISTRATION MANAGER**  
Glover Memorial Hall,  
4, Custom Street, Marina, Lagos.  
Tel: 01-2641020, 0803 328 1270, 0803 327 2496  
E-mail: glover@infoweb.abs.net

## GLOVER MEMORIAL HALL

*Offers you excellent service for events such as*

**Wedding Reception/Engagement**

**Birthday / End-of-Year Parties  
and Award Ceremony**

**Completion Board Meeting / AGM**

**Dinner / Dance**

**Seminar/Workshop/Symposia/  
Lecture**

**Cultural Nite / Arts Festival**

**Products and Book Presentation**

**Exhibition / Promotion / Fair**

**Drama and Musical Concert /Jam**



**GLOVER  
MEMORIAL  
HALL**

*The Place for the Event*

4 Custom Street,  
Marina, Lagos. 01-2641020 glover@infoweb.abs.net

Conference &  
Seminars at  
Glover Hall



800 - 1000 Seater Auditorium

#### Story behind the Hall

Located in the Central Business Area off Marina, is the Glover Memorial Hall. A monument that has recorded historical and cultural landmarks in Lagos.

The Foundation stone of the first Glover Hall was laid in 1887 on a piece of land that was donated by the legendary trader and activist Madam Tinubu as a memorial to the works of Sir John Hawley Glover, the then Governor of Lagos Colony from 1864-1972.

The Hall has played host to generations of Nigerian artistes and eminent personalities including Herbert Ogunde, Victor Olaiya, Moses Olaiya Adejumo, Toun Oni, Herbert Macaulay, Nnamdi Azikwe amongst others

A stage play  
performed at  
Glover Hall

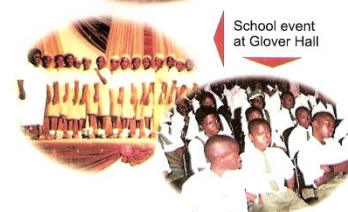


Engagement  
at Glover Hall

Exhibition  
Foyer  
and Visitors  
at Exhibition  
at Glover Hall



Reception  
Area  
at Glover Hall



School event  
at Glover Hall



Wedding  
Reception at  
Glover Hall



Dr. Nnamdi Azikwe



Sir Herbert Macaulay

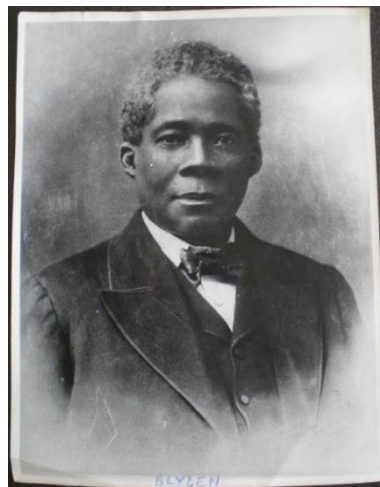
Eminent  
personalities  
hosted at  
Glover Hall

**Appendix 11: The Portrait of Lady Denton which was still on the Wall of the Glover Memorial Hall (at the time of 2007)**



(Source: CMS Album II [OSP 1/8], Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan)

**Appendix 12: The Portrait of Edward Wilmot Blyden which was still on the Wall of the Glover Memorial Hall (at the time of 2007)**



(Source: CMS Album II [OSP 1/18], Nigerian National Archive, Ibadan)

Appendix 13: Memorial Poem for a Son of Richard Beale Blaize Passed away in England in 1897

IN MEMORIAM.

A LOVING TRIBUTE TO R. B. B.

We begin to die as soon as we are born and the end is linked with the beginning.—Lucretius.  
Their spirits survive their breath.—Sidonius Appollinaris.

R Richard art thou gone, ah, gone for ever?  
I Is this the end of all our being—our goal?  
C Ceased that voice, in the spring time of life?  
H Hast thou crossed life's dreary bound so soon?  
A Ah! Lost for aye! alas a sorry thought  
R Relentless Fate! is this thy stern decree,  
D Dead? thou fillest a grave untimely dug.

Few years ago thou left thy native soil  
In youth and beauty's pride unknown to toil.  
In hope we bade adieu, and with full hope  
To cheer thy return ah short human sight  
All but Fancy's whisper—phantoms of hope  
The Pilot of man's course has thought it right.  
Scarce out of thy teens in youth's fair spring  
Deck'd with pearly dew's thou bloomed a fair rose  
While smil'd propitious sun on cherished hopes  
The wintry blasts have nipp'd thee in the bud  
Thou'rt eclipsed like the sun in morning tide  
In a chilly clime thou wert frost bitten.

That Hall renowned in Odunlami Street  
Have lost a gem that once deckt its walls  
Mourn thy brave hero—thy Dick—Mother benign!  
Once he fought thy fame to establish  
His memory thy children fondly cherish  
Recollections fond, their memories sadden.

Lagos! Mourn thy son, to better thy state  
He left thy shores—to build thy bulwarks  
Dost thou supply the needs of thy children  
For thee their lives they sacrifice—ah think  
Others exposed, for thee do toil—just think  
Be selfish no more—thy duties perform.

Thy remains, thy land would proudly keep  
For that glorious morn—but with Poets we weep  
"By foreign hands thy dying eyes were clos'd  
By foreign hands thy decent limbs compos'd  
By foreign hands thy humble grave adorned  
By strangers honoured and by stranger's mourn'd."

Thou deprivest thy friends this great honour  
Therefore the more they mourn that awful hour  
Thy friendly grasp, thy pleasing smile, thy form  
These are relics in our poor weak memory.  
Our grief we hush—lest our mortal note destroy  
The sweet music of thine eternal joy.

Thou Parent! whose heart doth nestle fond in him  
Sisters, Brothers, who fain would hear yet sadly  
Keep the parting words of a dear Brother  
And circle round his bed of death in tears  
How sunk your hearts! prey to grief and cares  
Fate has torn the bosom chords—the tenderest  
That nature has woven and strung the finest.

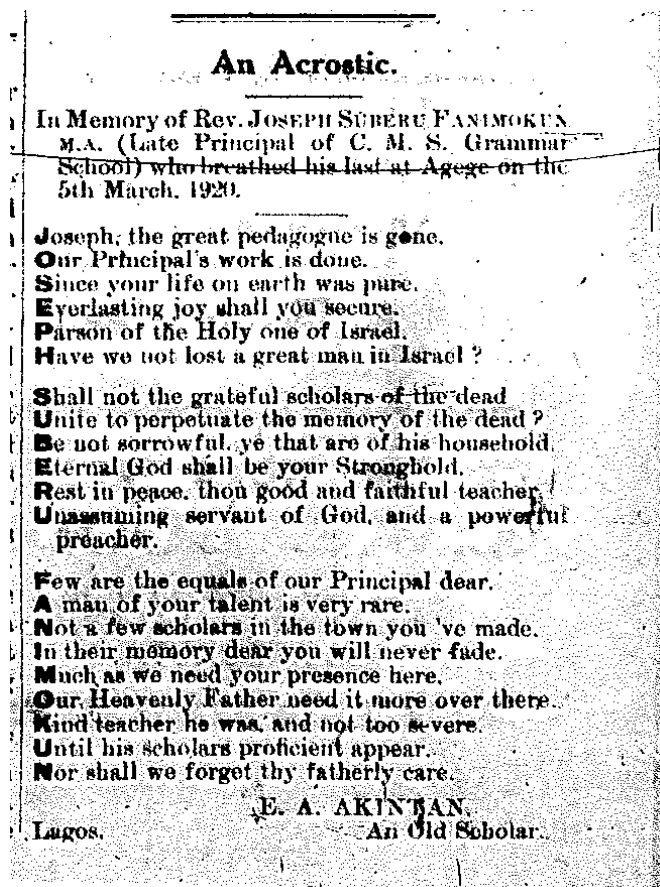
Parted for aye? No! that a mortal thought  
Hopeful your sorrow be. He is asleep.  
Disposer of all events—Father benign  
Thou alone canst heal the wound thou gavest  
Point their grief—worn and tearful eyes  
To bright immortal scenes beyond the grave.

B Beyond this vale of tears there is  
L Life immortal, blissful, unending tearless  
A An entrance to fields celestial Death is  
I In full hope of the resurrection morn  
Z Zealously our part in life let us play  
E Ere we are enveloped in a dreadful gloom.

M. S. C.

(LS, 17 March 1897, 3)

#### Appendix 14: Acrostic Memorial Poem for Rev. Joseph Seberu Fanimokun



(LWR, 20 March 1920, 6)

#### Appendix 15: Memorial Poem for J. A. O. Payne

In Memoriam—Hon J. A. Otonba-Payne who departed this life on the  
20<sup>th</sup> December 1906

Thy why, not mine, O Lord,  
However dark it be;  
Lead me by Thine own hand  
Choose out the path for me  
Not mine, not mine, the choice  
In things or great or small.  
Be thou my guide my strength  
My wisdom, and my all

J.A.B.O.P.

(LWR, 20 December 1913, 4)

## Appendix 16: Occupational Distribution of Indigenous Nigerians in 1891

Occupation	Town and Harbour of Lagos	Central District (exclusive of Lagos)	Easter District	Western District	Total
Apprentices	134	—	1	—	135
Auctioneers	4	—	—	—	4
Bag makers	—	5	38	226	269
Bakers	19	—	—	4	23
Bamboo and thatch cutters	33	47	33	130	243
Barbers	22	2	—	2	26
Barristers-at-law (of the English Bar)	2	—	—	—	2
Basket makers	34	12	2	25	73
Blacksmiths	93	29	15	44	181
Boat and canoe makers	18	—	13	9	40
Bricklayers	241	1	3	6	251
Brick makers	24	105	—	2	131
Butchers	73	2	2	10	87
Calabash carvers	3	—	—	5	8
Canoe-men	470	120	36	153	779
Carpenters	448	7	6	15	476
Civil servants	407	7	43	59	516
Clerks	232	—	5	4	241
Coopers	86	3	5	2	96
Dispenser	1	—	—	—	1
Domestic servants	1,395	43	46	149	1,633
Druggist	5	—	—	—	5
Drummers	39	9	1	7	56
Dyers	1,029	227	48	583	1,884
Engineers	9	—	—	—	9
Farmers	1,432	5,653	2,321	6,505	15,911
Fetish priest	100	79	17	11	308
Fishermen	818	1,593	281	374	3,066
Fish sellers	403	789	35	204	1,431
Gold and silver smiths	29	—	—	1	30
Grass prepares	—	3	—	18	21
Hair plaiters	9	9	—	1	19
Hat makers	5	7	1	14	27
Horsemen	85	1	2	1	89
Hunters	8	39	32	13	92
Labourers	1,254	68	35	79	1,436
Lime burners	14	13	—	—	26
Muslim priests	131	10	13	11	165
Masters of vessels	2	—	—	—	2
Mat makers	24	135	57	497	713
Mate of vessel	1	—	—	—	1
Mercantile agents	11	—	2	—	13

Merchants	19	—	—	—	19
Ministers of religion	22	11	—	4	37
Native Chiefs	9	19	—	4	32
Native doctors	102	36	9	17	164
Native food sellers	946	2,125	1,404	3,621	8,096
Native hut builders	5	12	—	—	17
Newspaper editor	1	—	—	—	1
Painters	17	—	—	—	17
Palm-oil makers	17	1,809	1,700	1,090	4,616
Palm-wine sellers	3	60	33	41	137
Photographers	2	—	—	—	2
Pot makers	2	3	—	97	102
Printers	19	2	—	—	21
Rope makers	6	3	—	6	15
Salt makers	—	—	8	—	8
Sawyers	38	44	9	27	118
Schoolboys	2,323	139	71	109	2,642
Schoolgirls	1,550	83	34	34	1,701
School maters	104	13	1	6	124
School mistresses	26	4	—	—	30
Seamen	20	—	—	—	20
Sempstresses	291	6	4	6	307
Shoemakers	66	—	—	2	68
Shop attendants	71	3	—	2	76
Snuff makers	20	—	30	23	73
Soap makers	4	—	—	14	18
Stokers	50	—	—	2	52
Tailors	424	36	27	37	524
Tanners	38	4	5	26	73
Telegraphists	2	—	—	—	2
Thatchers	22	—	1	20	43
Traders	12,040	3,861	803	3,242	19,946
Washers and ironers	439	10	6	17	472
Watch and clock repairs	4	—	—	—	4
Watchmen	54	5	2	19	80
Weavers	186	21	15	38	260
Wood sellers	170	122	9	140	441
Other occupations	22	3	4	5	34

(Source: *Annual Report of Lagos* 1891, 45-47)

Total working population of “Native” in Lagos and its Suburbs: 70,811 (male 41,800; female 43,807)

Total “Native” population: 85,457.

Total population of Lagos and suburb area 85,607



**Appendix 17: Total Volume of Exports and Average Prices for Palm Oil and Palm Kernels in Lagos 1880-92**

	Palm Oil		Palm Kernels	
Year	Total export (tons)	Price per ton (to nearest £)	Total export (tons)	Price per ton (to nearest £)
1880	4,988	N/A	29,632	N/A
1881	6,024	30	20,801	12
1882	8,791	33	28,591	12
1883	6,571	39	25,820	15
1884	7,942	35	29,802	14
1885	8,859	28	30,805	12
1886	10,322	22	34,812	10
1887	8,354	22	35,784	10
1888	8,225	20	43,254	10
1889	7,890	23	32,715	10
1890	10,669	25	38,829	12
1891	14,016	24	42,342	10
1892	8,194	22	32,180	11

(Source: Colonial Annual Reports, nos. 32 and 58, Lagos, 1890, 1891, 1892; Hopkins 1964; 86; Ekundare 1973, 80)

## **Appendix 18: Scheme of Education in Agege District Schools**

Division: A. Vernacular School, B. Primary School, C. Post Primary School

### **A. VERNACULAR SCHOOL**

Subjects: Religions: As Religious Syllabus for the year

Seculars: Mainly Vernacular according to the Code, including Kindergarten and Gardening.

Efficiency in teaching: No teacher should be responsible for teaching more than two classes, or more than the limited number of children in the Code.

### **B. PRIMARY SCHOOL**

(a) To teach up to Standard III.

(b) Central School. To teach up to Standard IV.

Subjects: Religious. As Religious Syllabus.

Seculars: As in Code, including Yoruba and Agriculture in all classes.

During Certain periods of the year, one day in the week (probably Wednesday) or its equivalent will be spent on Agricultural and Handicraft training for boys, also on Domestic Economy for girls, under proper guidance, while the remaining school days will be spent on other School Subjects.

MANAGEMENT: There will be District Central School Board which will be in touch with the Government, and whose function is to assist in general matters affecting Education in the District.

Constituents: Members of the Post Primary School Board and Managers of Agege District Schools.

### **C. POST-PRIMARY SCHOOL.**

DEPARTMENTS: I. Post-primary. II. Normal A & B. III. Theological.

#### **I. POST-PRIMARY**

Subjects: (a) Religious and Moral Instructions

(b) Secular: Reading and Literature (English & Yoruba), Writing, Arithmetic, Composition, Algebra, Hygiene, General Knowledge including General Geography and History, Drawing, Elementary Geometry, Agricultural Training. One foreign language (optional)

(In the mean time to include Primary Standards IV to VI)

#### **II. NORMAL**

(a) Vernacular Teachers:

Qualification: Standard Five pass at least, including Yoruba and School Methods

(b) School Teachers:

To continue Post-Primary Subjects including School Method and Practice in teachings

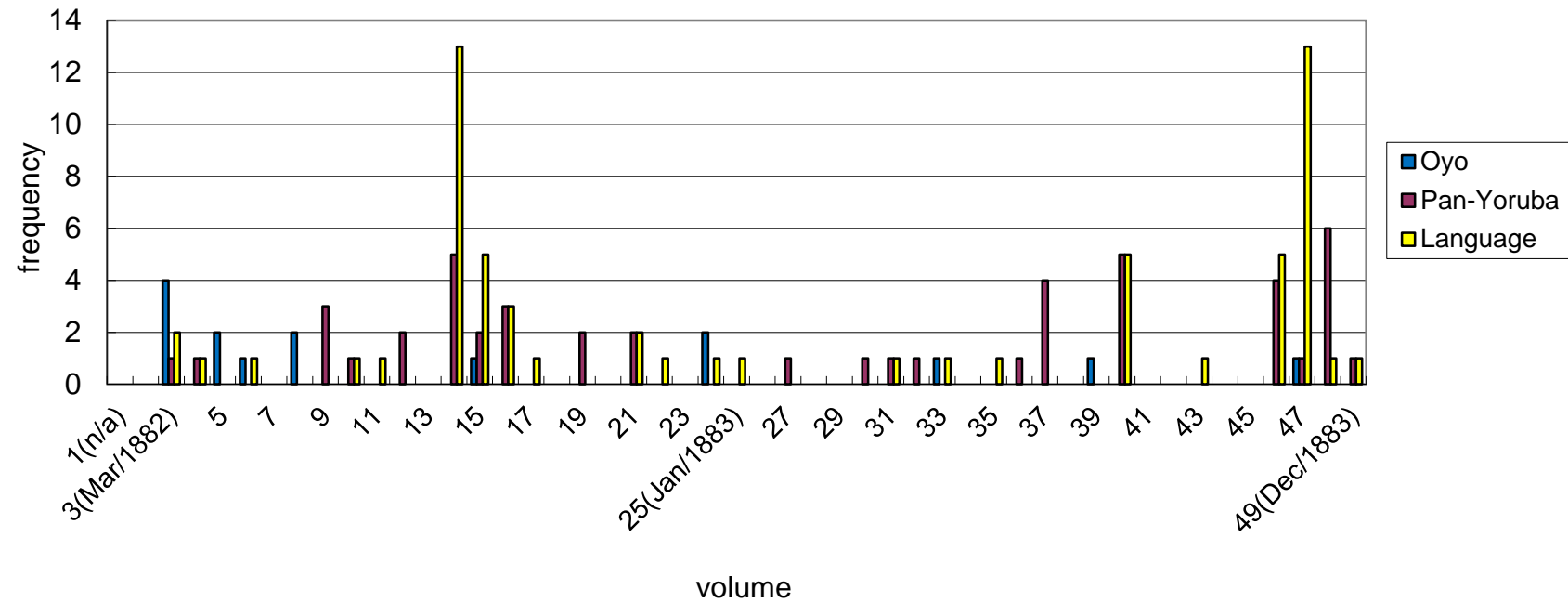
### III. THEOLOGICAL

Subjects: According to Church Syllabus

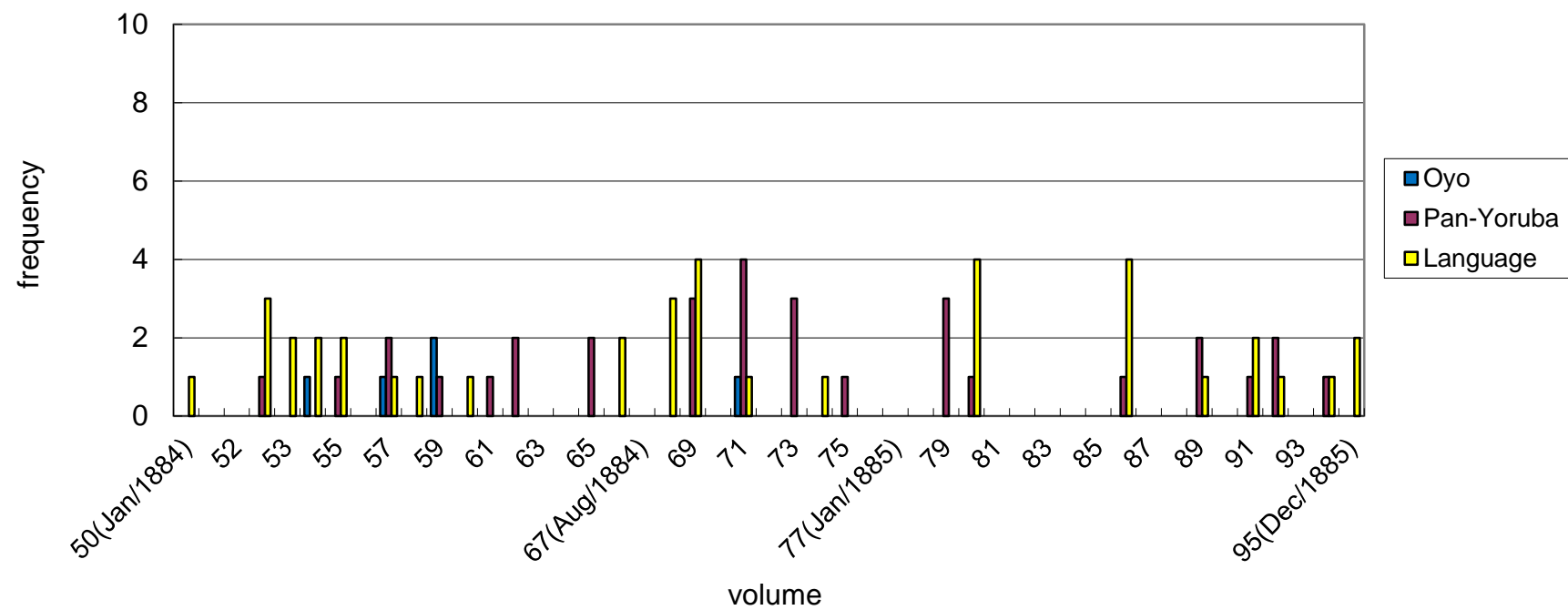
(Source: Coker Papers 1.1.3, Paper on scheme of education in Agege district [undated])

## Appendix 19: The Usage of the Term “Yoruba” in the Lagos Observer

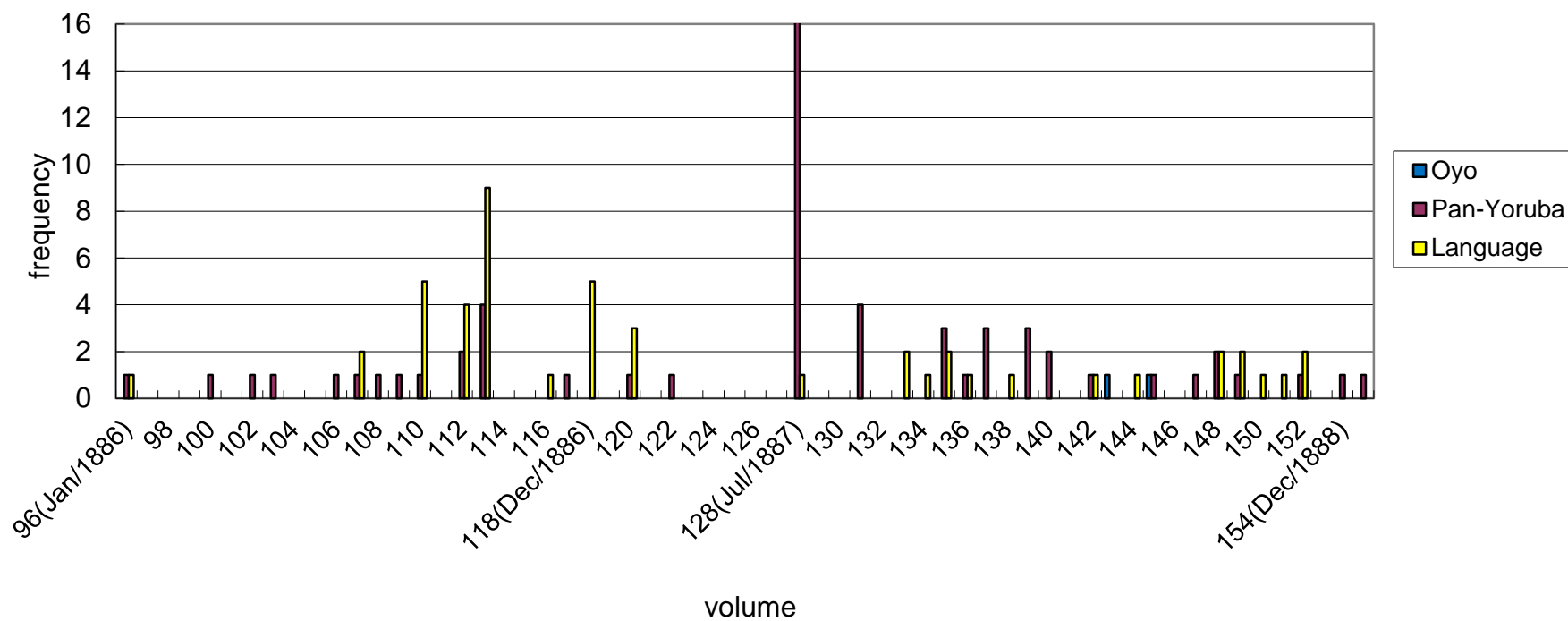
Usage of "Yoruba" in the Lagos Observer (1)



## Usage of "Yoruba" in the Lagos Observer (2)



### Usage of "Yoruba" in the Lagos Observer (3)



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<sup>346</sup> Information is at the time of 2 September 2010.

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